US passport fee to increase in April. PAGE 6
NMI Democrats: Making the CNMI heard in DC. PAGE 8

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XXVIII, Issue No. 55

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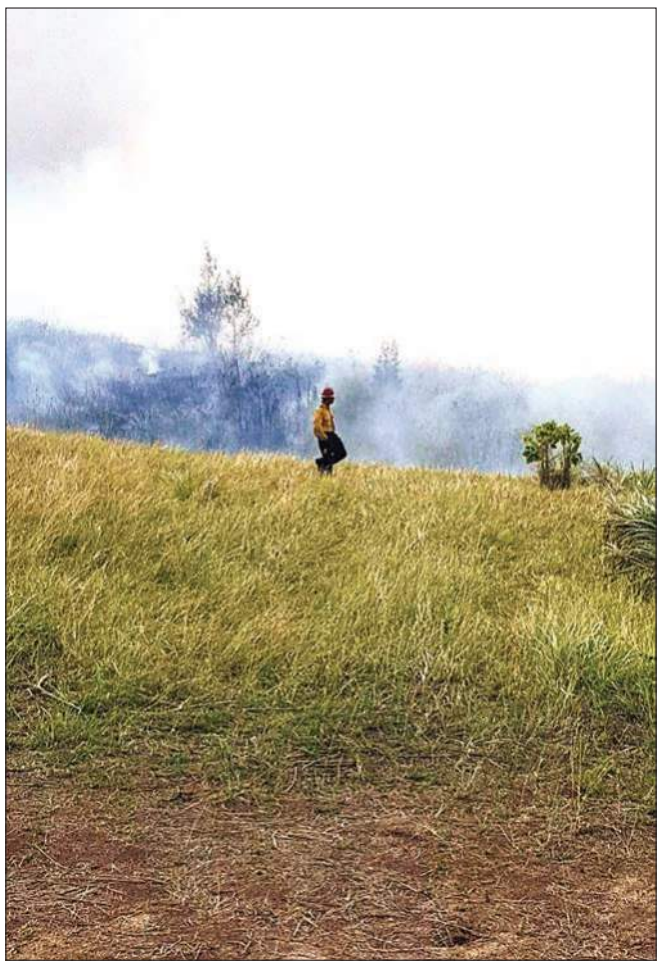


WILDLAND FIRE
A member of the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services Strike Team walks toward the area where a wildland fire destroyed vegetation in Wireless Ridge by Mt. Susu yesterday afternoon. As of press time, the fire was still raging. DFEMS

Torres nixes bill to make NMTI a public institution

A bill that would have converted the Northern Marianas Trades Institute into a public institution—and thus receive public funds—has been vetoed.

In his transmittal message to the 20th Legislature last Friday, March 16, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres expressed reservations about the bill's immediate and long-term financial impact on the government.

He did praise the Legislature for passing Senate Bill 20-21, SS1, SD1: "I commend the Legislature for making meaningful strides toward addressing the critical issues af-

See TORRES on Page 4

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, center, meets with officials of the Northern Marianas Trades Institute to discuss plans moving forward to safeguard the growth and success of NMTI. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NSDA names regional champs

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The National Speech and Debate Association has named its top finalists that will compete at the NSDA National Championship in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Students from various high schools across the CNMI competed at the NSDA regional championship from March 15 to 17.

Last Saturday, 15 finalists were chosen to represent the CNMI (if funding permits) at the annual NSDA national championships that will be held in June.

Students from Marianas

See NSDA on Page 4

Yaquinto: 'Exempt' CUC employees got OT pay

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Several "exempt" employees of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp., who are supposedly not entitled to overtime pay, did in fact receive overtime pay, according to former CUC chief financial officer Matthew J. Yaquinto.

Yaquinto, through counsel David G. Banes, said that "exempt" employee like himself and the CUC executive director were not entitled to overtime pay, but that he could nonetheless receive and be paid overtime if his employer approves the pay.

In Yaquinto's answer to CUC's counterclaim and affirmative defenses to his lawsuit filed in federal court, Banes said CUC issued certain memoranda and

See YAQUINTO on Page 4

HANMI occupancy at 98 pct. in Feb.

The Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands reported a 97.68-percent average occupancy rate among 12 member-hotels in February 2018.

This reflects a 2-percent decrease compared to February 2017.

Average room rates were still relatively strong at $185.63, compared to $169.03 last February.

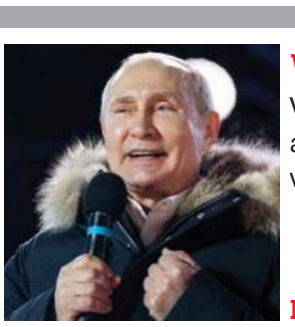
A total of 71,976 of 73,685 available room nights were sold in February 2017, compared to 64,932 of 64,851 available room nights sold over the same period last year.

"In February, HANMI member-hotels saw a stabili-

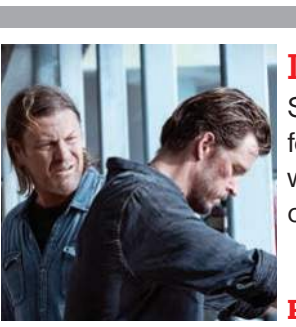
See HANMI on Page 4

INSIDE

NATION
Two people are injured in another explosion in Texas' capital.
PAGE 14



WORLD
Vladimir Putin rolled to a crushing re-election victory in Russia.
PAGE 16



LIFE & STYLE
Sean Bean is famous for the many creative ways in which he dies onscreen.
PAGE 20

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Local

By BEA CABRERA
beacabrerasaipan@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

Rick Egged, president of Waikiki Improvement District Association, far right, poses with Marianas Visitors Authority officials and guests at the MVA membership meeting last Thursday at Kensington Hotel Saipan.
BEA CABRERA

LEARNING FROM THE WAIKIKI EXPERIENCE

'It takes a village'

Waikiki, one of the most popular tourism destinations in the world, didn't just happen that way.

It took the effort of an entire community to make Waikiki what it is now as a popular destination for travel and leisure, according to Rick Egged, president of the Waikiki Improvement District Association.

Speaking at the Marianas Visitor's Authority general membership meeting last week, Egged said: "Waikiki today is the brainchild of the people, business community and the government."

He said that community effort and planning moved everything for Waikiki. "There will always be conflicting goals from different sectors and the key is to try to have people discuss their ideas [and] options.

"…When you start making changes and people feel the positive effects, each change becomes easier to make because you have a good track record," he added.

The Waikiki Improvement District Association, which Egged leads, works to enhance Waikiki's physical, economic and cultural environment. It is dedicated to ensuring the coordinated management and long term sustainability of Waikiki Beach.

Saipan tourism is still a baby compared to how Waikiki tourism runs today and Egged is positive that the CNMI can be as popular as Waikiki, provided careful planning is at play.

"The problem is…each part of the government is doing what they think is important in their job," Egged said. "A planning office is key to tie the pieces together, getting departments to talk to each other and coordinate their activities and having it become a part of a bigger plan."

Egged said that building Waikiki as a tourist destination took years of learning and development that other places like the CNMI can learn from.

"We had to know Waikiki through and through in order to address what needs to be developed and improved on. We recognize that Waikiki Beach is our single and most important asset and so we started really caring for it," he said.

"We used to lose one foot of beach a year to due to erosion and we successfully managed this by working with environmental groups and university students in keeping erosion at bay and one of the solutions that we implemented was to widen the shores," he added.

According to Egged, Waikiki, with its diverse residents and visitors, was once notorious for burglary and theft and this reputation had to be erased.

"Crimes dropped when we established Aloha patrol officers who deter theft and advise tourists, added cameras on the roads and streets, implemented intelligence-led policing, foot patrols and stationary posts, community policing and better lighting. We also addressed other issues like homelessness by putting the homeless in housing. Instead of building parking spaces, we built a good transportation system," he said.

"We have people that clean the streets of Waikiki 24/7 weekly by pressure-washing the streets and gum removals. For last year alone, we mopped 30,000 spills, erased 5,000 graffiti, and collected 16,000 bags of trash. These and more are being done every day to make Waikiki an ideal destination," he added.

One of the things that make Waikiki unique is that they were successful in "restoring its Hawaiiness."

"Restoring cultural awareness was something that we worked on extensively in Waikiki because...your unique culture is something that visitors are interested in seeing and sharing," he said.

"A visitor industry creates a market that can keep alive some of those cultural activities that might die out otherwise.

"…If visitors can participate just by observation or join workshops, whether as dance or crafts, the visitor's industry can actually be helpful in keeping alive traditions that would otherwise die out," he added.

At the end of the day, Egged said the success of Waikiki is based on good stewardship.

"Good stewardship and engaging stakeholders in the community are key elements because, for the visitor industry to be successful, it needs to be engaged with the community. This is one of our secrets to succeeding in Waikiki," he said.

"It all boils down to don't give up, keep trying and even if it is a small thing, do that first so that you create the momentum for further change. If it happened for Waikiki, it can also definitely happen for the CNMI," he added.

Tourism Topics
A bi-weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.
The Marianas
Saipan | Tinian | Rota
HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY

Tourism Industry Personnel Profiles

Kuen-Hee Han

As part of the tourism industry of The Marianas, the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) is the state tourism office responsible for promoting the destination. Kuen-Hee Han serves at the MVA as Tour Guide Certification Manager in the newest division of the office, which oversees the training and certification of all tour operators and tour guides.

What does your job entail? "Right now, the program is mainly focused on having individual tour guides and operators come in compliance, basically to submit their paperwork. My biggest hurdle was to get the program launched. I have had a lot of help, from detailing rules and regulations to developing curriculum, developing a manual with accompanying videos, designing the badge and the certificate, and more."

What do you enjoy most about your career in tourism? "I enjoy using all the experience I have had and applying those skills to ensure the success of my program. I enjoy talking to various people who walk into my office and hearing about their experiences. Every surf in the net, every magazine, every language skill comes in handy."

Any future goals in the industry? "My job is not only to make tour guides come into compliance but also to help them find organization and channels of communication. My department will make more videos about different sites and develop safety protocols that will hopefully have some impact on some of safety issues we have seen recently.

"People behave differently depending on what we expect. Tour guides and tourists alike, I think we have to set the bar a little higher and set good examples. It starts by picking up our own garbage after picnics and taking an interest in what tourists are doing in our communities."

Upcoming Events

- **Tagaman Triathlon**
  March 24, 2018

www.mymarianas.com

Measure to pay retiree death benefits goes to Torres

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The House of Representatives passed last Friday a measure to pay deceased retirees' remaining loved ones the rest of their debt during the collapse of the NMI Retirement Fund.

Prior to the implementation of the settlement agreement between the government and the NMI Settlement Fund, the Retirement Fund provided the survived loved ones of retirees $1,000 as death benefits.

"Since the settlement, the beneficiaries have only since been receiving 75 percent of the $1,000 death benefit," said Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), author of House Bill 20-141. "This bill would provide the statute needed to pay for it as well as the funding source for it."

According to Demapan, the funding source of the legislation is the Retirement Fund, which he said that, according to Finance Secretary Larissa Larson, has adequate funding for such a purpose.

According to the settlement agreement, the CNMI government would shoulder the 25 percent remainder of the agreed 75 percent Settlement Fund responsibility for retirees. With this, according to the bill, the Settlement Fund has taken the position that the 25 percent payment for death benefits should be paid to the Settlement Fund by the Commonwealth government even though it is an obligation of the NMI Retirement Fund, which is a separate entity.

According to paragraph 8.2 of the settlement agreement, it states that, "All liabilities of the CNMI Fund shall be transferred to the CNMI and are assigned as the liabilities of the CNMI except for the benefits payable to the Settlement Class Members as provided herein."

Also, upon discovery that several families of the retirees have been on standby for the remaining 25 percent owed them from the death benefit, H.B. 20-141 was drafted.

The House last Friday accepted the Senate's amendments.

The bill contained a retroactive clause, so those who have been affected by the 25 percent lack of death benefits may expect the remaining balance if H.B. 20-141 is enacted into law.

"…The bill would take care of families who only received 75 percent; it would take care of them retroactively and… would ensure that nobody else has to worry about not getting 25 percent of that benefit," said Demapan.

According to Demapan, the CNMI government owes about $50,000 retroactively.

"We hope that when it gets to the governor it would get his favorable consideration because this bill would really go a long way to helping retirees' beneficiaries in dealing with funeral expenses and other collateral expenses that come with the passing of a family member," said Demapan.

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No probable cause to charge 1 of 2 accused of rape

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Charges against one of two men accused of raping a 52-year-old woman at a house on Saipan were dismissed without prejudice Friday.

No probable cause was found during a preliminary hearing to believe that 46-year-old Jaime Always committed sexual assault in the first degree and sexual assault in the first degree.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho dismissed the case against Always, saying the government has failed to prove the essential element of sexual penetration.

"This is the failure of the Office of the Attorney General and Department of Public Safety to properly investigate and determine what type of sex occurred," Camacho said in his order.

Always was ordered released from the Department of Corrections. However, the dismissal was without prejudice, which means the government may re-file the case in the future.

Camacho said it is for the OAG and DPS to present witnesses that will testify on each and every element of the charges.

"Like a car with missing wheels will not move, or an airplane without wings will not fly, the Office of the Attorney General has the burden to prove each and every essential element," Camacho said.

The judge said that in the case of sexual assault in the first degree, the essential element that must be proven is sexual penetration.

He said sexual assault in the first degree requires that the element of sexual penetration be proven.

By example, he said, sexual assault in the second degree requires the element of sexual contact (not penetration).

Camacho said that, according to the lead detective, the alleged victim reported that the two defendants—Always and Weiner Sony—raped her.

The detective testified that when the alleged victim was asked what she meant by "rape," she replied that "rape" means being "scared and frightened."

Camacho said there was no testimony that Always sexually penetrated the alleged victim.

To be sure, Camacho said, there was testimony that sex occurred. However, sex can be sexual contact or sexual penetration. He said many things can be sexual but it does not automatically mean sexual penetration.

Camacho noted that Always and Sony both claimed having had consensual sex with the alleged victim.

Assistant attorney general Teri C. Tenorio appeared for the government at the hearing. Chief Public Defender Douglas Hartig and assistant public defender Heather Zona appeared as counsel for Always.

According to police detective Buddy S. Igitol, police officers responded to a house last Feb. 4 to investigate a reported sexual assault.

Upon arriving, the officers met a woman, who stated that two men known to her raped her. The woman identified Always and Sony, who were found by the officers sleeping inside the house where the rape allegedly happened.

Igitol said Always and Sony were interviewed and admitted to have had sex with the woman, but that it was consensual.

The case against Sony is still pending in court.

NSDA

From Page 1

High School, Saipan Southern High School, Grace Christian Academy, Saipan International School, Mount Carmel School, Kagman High School, and Marianas Baptist Academy competed in 14 categories at the regionals: duo, humorous interpretation, dramatic interpretation, international extemporaneous, original oratory, Lincoln-Douglas debate, extemporaneous, Chamorro, expository, commentary, prose, poetry, storytelling, and impromptu.

In the impromptu category, Emma Timmens from MHS placed first, Theresa Zheng from MCS placed second, Shea Hartig from SIS placed third, Elijah Pajarillaga from GCA placed fourth, and Sumin Woo from GCA placed fifth.

Zheng will be representing the CNMI at the NSDA nationals in the impromptu category.

For storytelling, Elizabeth Jones from KHS placed first, Kelvin Wolf from MHS placed second, Esther Park from MHS placed third, Edson Valdisimo from KHS placed fourth, and Joseph Zhang from MHS placed fifth.

Park will be representing the CNMI in the storytelling category.

In prose, Kate Ishida from MHS placed first, Jeff Melchor from MCS placed second, Na Lee Lee from GCA placed third, Kelvin Wolf from MHS placed fourth, and Nehemiah Fernandez from SSHS placed fifth.

Melchor will be representing the CNMI in the prose category.

In poetry, Sumin Melody Woo from GCA placed first, Jeremiah Fernandez from SSHS placed second, James Park from MHS placed third, Kate Ishida from MHS placed fourth, and Deidre Rosette from MHS placed fifth.

Woo will be representing the CNMI in the poetry category at the nationals.

For expos, Elizabeth Jones from KHS placed first, Kelvin Wolf from MHS placed second, Theresa Zheng from MCS placed third, Maxine Rabago from MHS placed fourth, and Danielle Acosta from MHS placed fifth.

Representing the CNMI in the expos category will be Jones.

For commentary, Elijah Pajarillaga from GCA placed first, Lanz Victoria from GCA placed second, Arvin Dayao from GCA placed third, Esther Huh from MHS placed fourth, and Joanie Paraiso from MCS placed fifth.

Victoria will be representing the CNMI in the commentary category.

For Chamorro, Nina Valdisimo from KHS placed first, Victoria DelaCruz from MHS placed second, Jonelle Toscas from MCS placed third, and Michelle Palacios from MCS placed fourth.

Valdisimo will represent the CNMI in the English category at the nationals.

For international extemporaneous, Jeremiah Fernandez from SSHS placed first, Emma Timmons from MHS placed second, Arvin Dayao from GCA placed third, Grace Zhang from MHS placed fourth, and Martin Pangelinan from GCA placed fifth.

Timmons will be representing the CNMI in the international extemporaneous category.

In the extemporaneous category, Elijah Pajarillaga from GCA placed first, Jederick Villar from MCS placed second, Lanz Victoria from GCA placed third, Esther Huh from MHS placed fourth, and Ao Feng Zheng from GCA placed fifth.

Pajarillaga will represent the CNMI in the extemporaneous category at the nationals.

For original oratory, Kate Ishida from MHS placed first, Esther Kim from MHS placed second, Victoria Santos from MBA placed third, Na Lee Lee from GCA placed fourth, and Maxine Rabago from MHS placed fifth.

Kate Ishida will represent the CNMI in the original oratory category.

For humorous interpretation, Kelvin Wolf from MHS placed first, Elizabeth Jones from KHS placed second, Timothy Acosta from MHS placed third, Grace Zhang from MHS placed fourth, and Joseph Zhang from MHS placed fifth.

Wolf will represent the CNMI in the upcoming NSDA nationals in the humorous interpretation category.

For duo, Nehemiah and Jeremiah Fernandez from SSHS placed first, Nina Valdisimo and Esther Jones from KHS placed second, Esther Park and Esther Kim from MHS placed third, Kaye Obando and Julia Malate from MHS placed fourth, and Christian Palattao and Joshua Alfred from MBA placed fifth.

The Fernandez duo will represent the CNMI at the upcoming NSDA national championships.

For dramatic interpretation, James Park from MHS placed first, Sumin Woo from GCA placed second, Elizabeth Jones from KHS placed third, Jeff Melchor from MCS placed fourth, and Deidre Rosete placed fifth.

Park will represent the CNMI in the dramatic interpretation category.

In the Lincoln-Douglas debate, Shea Hartig from SIS placed first, Emma Timmons from MHS placed second, and Eileen No from SIS placed third.

Hartig will represent the CNMI at the NSDA nationals under the LD debate category.

TORRES

From Page 1

fecting our labor force and for recognizing the need for well-coordinated and comprehensive training sources for local U.S. citizens and permanent residents."

The bill sought to convert the NMTI, a private nonprofit school, into a public career and technical training institution that will be called "the Northern Marianas Technical Institute," therefore giving NMTI all the powers conferred by law upon a public corporation.

"In light of the substantial nature of this endeavor, due diligence must be afforded to ensuring that responsible fiscal planning exists before the government can undertake any additional financial burdens; these efforts include an evaluation of NMTI's current assets and private debts. Thus, although I agree with the bill's intent and purpose, I am unable to approve of S.B. 20-21, SS1, SD1 until I can assiduously address these concerns," Torres said.

Despite this, Torres assured that he supports NMTI's mission of developing the local workforce and its role to ensure that every willing local worker has the skills and access to employment in order to be self-sufficient, progress within the economy, and become contributing members of society.

"For this reason, I will continue to secure the necessary funding for the advancement and operation of NMTI," he said. "Additionally, it is my goal to create a task force within the various government agencies in order to thoroughly assess the trade school's current and future organizational and financial structure."

Torres said his administration will designate a suitable property within the Commonwealth to act as a permanent home for NMTI.

In line with this, Torres encouraged the active involvement and investment of the Public School System in this goal. "It is my belief that a partnership between PSS and NMTI will be a mutually beneficial one that will meet our shared objective of developing the Commonwealth's human potential."

He did assure that, although he is vetoing the bill at this time, he looks forward to working with all stakeholders and the Legislature "to safeguard the growth and success of NMTI." ***(Saipan Tribune)***

HANMI

From Page 1

zation of average occupancy rates and a slight rise in average room rates, due in part to the demand of Lunar New Year holiday travel," said HANMI chair Gloria Cavanagh. "This is an opportune time for hotels to make renovations and improve their facilities, as visitors are looking for modern amenities. At the same time, we are most anxious for a reprieve to our workforce uncertainties through the Northern Marianas U.S. Workforce Act now in the U.S. House. Without foreign workers, the tourism industry and the CNMI economy will collapse. This is foremost on our minds, and we continue to work with the local government, federal government, and other island businesses to resolve this issue."

HANMI was established in 1985 as a professional forum for the hospitality industry of the NMI.

HANMI also makes regular charitable donations to support non-profit organizations and tourism-related government projects. ***(PR)***

YAQUINTO

From Page 1

had certain policies related to overtime pay, but that the evidence of what those memoranda state are the memoranda themselves.

Banes said that Yaquinto admits CUC generally did not permit payroll advances, that he initially requested payroll advances, but after learning of this policy decided not to pursue the requests. Banes said Yaquinto denies his requests were turned down.

Yaquinto denies he stripped any CUC official, including the treasurer and chief of accounting, of any oversight or management responsibilities or preventing anyone from performing their duties and responsibilities.

Yaquinto denies "instructing" anyone to pay him overtime.

Banes said that Yaquinto admits he asked CUC to deposit his salary to his bank accounts in Thailand, Russia, and Georgia. Since his accounts were in other countries, these direct deposits required wire transfers, but Yaquinto denied "instructing" anyone to pay him overtime or cash advances.

Yaquinto denies that direct deposits to his accounts required prior approval but admits anyway that CUC did approve of these deposits.

Yaquinto said CUC was not charged for any such deposits.

Yaquinto admits he did request CUC to reimburse him for travel costs, which was a term of his employment contract, and that his travel costs were in fact more than $10,000.

He admits that he provided CUC with receipts for each and every expense he incurred and that he was reimbursed for those amounts.

Banes said any damage suffered or sustained by CUC was caused solely by the conduct of CUC itself or by third persons, entities or parties for those conduct that Yaquinto is not responsible.

Banes said CUC is barred from recovery because, among other things, its own conduct excused or allowed payments to Yaquinto.

Yaquinto asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI to dismiss CUC's counterclaim.

In its counterclaim filed last February, CUC accused Yaquinto of collecting $49,399 in unauthorized overtime pay, causing unauthorized wire transfers of $58,000 to Russia and Thailand, and failing to reimburse $10,000 in moving expenses to Saipan.

CUC, through counsel James S. Sirok, filed the counterclaim against Yaquinto for unauthorized overtime pay, unauthorized wire transfers, and unsupported moving expenses.

CUC asked the court to hold Yaquinto liable to pay back the $49,399 in unauthorized overtime payments, damages representing wire transfer costs, $10,000 in moving expenses, as well as court costs, expert fees, and attorney's fees.

Yaquinto filed last Dec. 29 a discrimination lawsuit against CUC and five others over his termination as chief financial officer in May 2016.

Japan's Doberman Infinity ties up with MVA

Japanese hip-hop group Doberman Infinity is tying up with the Marianas Visitors Authority to promote the Marianas.

The music group released the official image song "Lookin' For" at the MVA's media reception in Tokyo on March 2, held in conjunction with the tourism office's annual series of Marianas seminars with travel trade representatives and media in Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya.

"We're super excited to be joining Doberman Infinity in launching this new song in Japan exclusively for the Marianas," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "As we are sharing with travel trade partners during the Marianas Seminars, the Marianas is committed to the Japan market by reviving our image as a quality, hip destination and attracting a new generation of Japanese visitors."

Over 120 media representatives attended the press conference and media reception. In addition to the song release, Doberman Infinity will have a familiarization tour to film a promotion video in the Marianas and plans to bring a fan tour to Saipan in the coming months. The new song will be included in the group's third album scheduled to be released on April 18, 2018.

Doberman Infinity is represented by international management company LDH JAPAN and has five members: Kubo-C, GS, P-Cho, SWAY, and Kazuki. ***(MVA)***

Japan hip-hop group Doberman Infinity premiere their new single "Lookin' For" at the Marianas Visitors Authority's media reception on March 2, 2018, in Tokyo. The group will help promote tourism to the Marianas through the official image song and a fan tour to the islands later this year. From left are MVA Japan in-country manager Takashi Ichura, Kubo-C, GS, P-Cho, Kazuki, MVA chair Gloria Cavanagh, and MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. MVA

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Guma Hustisia closed yesterday

The Guma Hustisia in Susupe, Saipan was closed yesterday, March 19, 2018, due to continuing efforts to repair the air-conditioning system. The Office of Adult Probation Satellite Office behind the Guma' Hustisia will maintain regular business hours. The Centron Hustisia on Tinian and the Kotten Tinian on Tinian will maintain regular business hours. For additional information, contact Deanna M. Manglona-Gogo at 236-9715 or email deanna.manglona@justice.gov.mp or Novelyn Wania-Tenorio at 236-9765 or email at novelyn.waniatenorio@justice.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

Military training in Guam, FDM

ASAN, Guam—The U.S. military is conducting training at Naval Base Guam and the island of Farallon de Medinilla beginning yesterday, March 19, until March 29, from noon to 11pm.

Residents in the area can expect to hear an increase in Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron 25 traffic as part of this training. These trainings are designed to enhance the readiness of military personnel. Residents in surrounding areas should not be alarmed if they see or hear increased activity associated with the training.

It is recommended the public, fishermen and marine tour operators monitor the Coast Guard broadcast notice to mariners for advisories.

The general location of the training on the islands of Guam and Farallon de Medinilla will be in a 12-nautical mile radius of each island. ***(PR)***

JKPL hours of operation

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library will be closed on Saturday, March 24, for Commonwealth Covenant Day and on Friday, March 30, for Good Friday. For more information, visit the www.cnmilib.org and like and/or follow JKPL's Facebook page. ***(PR)***

Free business seminar for veterans & spouses

The CNMI Military/Veteran's Affairs Office and the Small Business Development Center will be offering a free business seminar called "Reboot to Business" at Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan's Azucena Room on March 26, from 9am to 4pm, presented by Dennis Kwak, director, Veterans Business Outreach Center of the Pacific. To register, contact Velma Del Rosario at 664-2650 or visit https://sbavets.force.com/s/. ***(PR)***

Junior high mock trial on April 7

The 13th Annual Junior High Mock Trial will take place on Saturday, April 7, from 8am to 12pm, at the CNMI courthouse, where middle school students of the CNMI will be arguing a fictitious case of a shootout between agents of the Drug Enforcement Agency and a farmer. This year there will be 10 schools participating. Schools will be paired in rounds, which will be presided by a judge. The CNMI Junior High Mock Trial is a signature program of the Northern Marianas Humanities Council where students learn about the law and standard courtroom procedures in a non-competitive format. The program is free and open to the public. The CNMI Junior High Mock Trial is made possible through funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities and in partnership with the CNMI Public School System and the CNMI Judiciary. For more information, call Council staff at 235-4785. ***(PR)***

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Duties: Sells and markets company's merchandise to retail stores and outlets. Contacts regular and prospective customers to explain and promote the quality and competitive costing of the company's products. Displays and/or demonstrates products and suggests products that meet customers' needs. Quotes prices and credit terms for purchase of company's products. Prepares sales slips or sales contracts. May sign purchase orders, and collect payment from customers. Ensures that customers' orders are properly filled. Arranges for delivery of products to customers. Assists Sales Manager in identifying prospective customers, monitoring market conditions and monitoring competitors' products and prices.

Two (2) Sales Representative
Minimum Qualifications: Associates degree (may be foreign equivalent) and two (2) years of experience as a sales representative for a wholesale company with a minimum of 550 sales items.
Duties: Sells company's merchandise to retail stores and outlets. Meets with customers in order to explain and promote the quality and competitive costing of the company's products. Quotes prices and credit terms for purchase of company's products. Prepares sales slips or sales contracts and may collect payment from customers. Ensures that customers' orders are properly filled. Arranges for delivery of products to customers.

One (1) Sales Consultant
Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree in marketing or marketing management (may be foreign educational equivalent) and two (2) years of experience as a Sales Consultant.
Duties: Sells and markets company's merchandise to retail stores and outlets. Contacts regular and prospective customers to explain and promote the quality and competitive costing of the company's products. Displays and/or demonstrates products and suggests products that meet customers' needs. Quotes prices and credit terms for purchase of company's products. Prepares sales slips or sales contracts. May sign purchase orders, and collect payment from customers. Ensures that customers' orders are properly filled. Arranges for delivery of products to customers. May do deliveries of merchandise to Customers when exigencies and circumstances require. Consults with customers after sale of products to resolve any issues and provide continuing support. Assists management in identifying prospective customers and monitoring competitors' products and prices. Performs other related duties.

Two (2) Product Demonstrators
Minimum Qualifications: High school diploma (may be foreign equivalent) one (1) year of experience as a product demonstrator or merchandiser/product demonstrator
Duties: Conduct product demo and explain products to customers. Set up props, demo materials and supplies and arrange displays or demonstration areas for prospective customers. Transport, assemble, and disassemble materials used in presentations. Prepare or alter presentation contents to target specific audiences. Prepare products and give samples to customers to try/test. Provide product information and suggest specific product purchases to meet customers' needs. Sell products being promoted and keep records of sales. Re-stock store shelves to replenish products sold following product merchandising procedures. Contact salesmen to replenish merchandise and assist in selling and delivery of merchandise. Perform other related duties.

One (1) Bookkeeper
Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree in Business Administration (any major) or Associate's degree in Accounting (degrees may be foreign equivalent), two (2) years of experience as bookkeeper, and one (1) year experience using QuickBooks or other accounting software program(s).
Duties: Records company's wholesale business transactions and retains all accounting records. Posts, verifies and reconciles accounts payables, accounts receivables, expenses, payroll and other ledger accounts. Prepares preliminary financial reports by collecting, analyzing and summarizing account information. Prepares payroll and payroll taxes and distributions to government. Prepares gross receipts tax returns. Documents business transactions and verifies purchase orders and other financial transactions in order to substantiate the transactions prior to settlement. Maintains and reconciles bank accounts. Uses QuickBooks accounting software program in performing job duties.

One (1) Computer Programmer
Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree in computer programming or two (2) year course in computer programming (may be foreign educational equivalent) and two (2) years of experience as a computer programmer.
Duties: Conduct trial runs of programs and software applications to be sure they will produce the desired information and that the instructions are correct. Maintain computer programs or software packages to handle specific jobs such as tracking inventory, receivables, etc. and storing or retrieving data. Perform or direct revision, repair, or expansion of existing programs to increase operating efficiency or adapt to new requirements. Consult with managerial personnel to clarify program intent, identify problems, and suggest changes. Perform systems analysis and programming tasks to maintain and control the use of computer systems software as a systems programmer. Consult with and assist computer operators or system analysts to define and resolve problems in running computer programs. Investigate whether networks, workstations, the central processing unit of the system, or peripheral equipment are responding to a program's instructions.

One (1) Graphic Artist
Minimum Qualification: Four (4) years of experience as a graphic artist for wholesale company with a minimum of 550 sales items.
Duties: Designs and creates visual products to meet company's promotional needs, including designing and creating promotional displays and marketing brochures, signs and signage systems, packaging, menus, and other visual products. Formulates visual marketing campaign and overall design concepts for company to reach target markets. Applies critical thinking and problem solving analysis to various design concepts and approaches that can be utilized to attain the desired effect on the target market. Creates innovative design solutions utilizing knowledge of graphic design theory and methodologies in conjunction with current cultural trends, market demographics, cultural preferences, and seasonal shifts to achieve optimum market response. Produces and coordinates the execution of mock-up and final graphic design and artwork for the visual products.

One (1) General Maintenance and Repair Worker
Minimum Qualifications: One (1) year vocational certificate in building systems mechanics (any field and may be foreign equivalent) and two (2) years of experience as a building systems mechanic (any field).
Duties: Maintenance and overall upkeep of the civil structures of the warehouse and the company's buildings. Maintenance and repair of facilities' plumbing and sewer systems; air conditioning systems including installations and upgrades; electrical systems including new connections and upgrades; office equipment such as computers, tablets, printers, copiers and telephones; maintenance and upkeep of the refrigeration equipment such as commercial beverage coolers; vehicles; and auxiliary generators. Performs other related duties as assigned by supervisor.

One (1) Assistant General Maintenance and Repair Worker
Minimum Qualification: One (1) year vocational certificate in building systems mechanics (any field and may be foreign equivalent).
Duties: Maintenance and repair of facilities' building systems including, but not limited to, electrical systems, including new connections and upgrades; air conditioning systems, including installations and upgrades; office equipment such as computers, tablets, printers, copiers and telephones; and maintenance and upkeep of the refrigeration equipment such as commercial beverage coolers, vehicles, and auxiliary generators. Performs other related duties as assigned by supervisor.

One (1) Building Custodian
Minimum Qualification: One (1) year of experience as building custodian
Duties: Keeps buildings and business premises in clean and orderly condition. Performs cleaning duties, such as cleaning floors, washing walls and glass, and removing rubbish from inside and outside of business premises. Performs routine maintenance activities and notifies management of need for repairs. Requisition supplies or equipment needed for cleaning and maintenance duties.

One (1) Sales/Delivery Driver
Minimum Qualification: Two (2) years of experience as a Sales/Delivery Driver or sales associate.
Duties: Sells and delivers company's merchandise to retail stores and outlets. Writes customer orders and sales contracts according to company guidelines. Collects money from customers, make change, and records transactions on customer receipts. Records sales and delivery information on daily sales or delivery record. Listens to and resolves customers' complaints regarding products.

If interested, send resume to Western Sales Trading Company by email to bello.lumintegar@yahoo.com or by fax at 670-322-9408. Proof of qualifications and police clearance required within three days of hire.

US passport fee to increase in April

The U.S. Department of State Bureau of Consular Affairs will impose a $10-increase to the U.S. passport application fee effective April 2, 2018.

The increase only applies to U.S. passport applicants using the DS-11 form, such as first-time applicants over 16, children under 16, and applicants who re-apply after reporting their previous passport lost or stolen, said Finance Secretary Larrisa Larson

Passport manager Maggie Naputi noted that the $10-increase does not apply to adults eligible to renew their passport by mail using the DS-82 form.

"Renewal customers can mail their application and supporting documentation to the Department of State and should not apply at a passport acceptance facility or pay an execution fee," Naputi said.

Larson

However, customers applying with the DS-11 form must pay two separate fees: an application fee to the U.S. Department of State and the execution fee to the passport acceptance facility.

These facilities include post offices, clerks of court, or public libraries that have been designated to accept passport applications on behalf of the U.S. Department of State.

The Department of State generally sets consular fees at an amount calculated to achieve recovery of the costs to the U.S. government of providing the consular service. The latest Cost of Service Model showed that the costs associated with passport execution were higher than the current fee of $25.

"We encourage the public to visit our Saipan U.S. Passport acceptance facility regarding any questions about first-time applicants or renewals. The U.S. Passport application requirements are also available online and we welcome applicants to visit our office at Ascension Drive Building 1321 on Capital Hill or call 664-4760 for more information on this fee increase," Larson said.

The proposed fee change was published in the Federal Register as a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and public comments were accepted until Nov. 18, 2016, 60 days after the notice's publication. The final rule, implementing the change, includes the department's response to relevant comments received. ***(PR)***

School counselors educated on mental health issues in students

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

This year's Counselors' Conference touched base on the possible causes of mental health issues in the youth today and how to deal with them.

During Friday's 10th Annual Counselors' Conference at the Northern Marianas College, the focus was more on prevention before intervention.

Various topics were discussed like bullying in schools, substance abuse prevention, and wellness services offered for students in need of further assistance.

One of the main topics discussed was bullying because it is not only prevalent in the United States, but in the Commonwealth as well and is considered one of the major underlying causes of mental health issues in teens today.

According to Community Guidance Center clinical services officer Dr. Glenda George, bullying has reached epidemic levels.

"Many kids deal with that [bullying] on a daily basis and the problem is that they don't speak about it," she said. In many bullying cases, teens tend to keep to themselves when they are bullied and don't reach out to anyone for the help that they need.

Last Friday, counselors were taught how to recognize the signs given by a student who is a victim of bullying and how to talk them into seeking the assistance needed to overcome it.

According to NMC Learning Support Services director Christine Inos, the event's purpose was to equip school counselors with the knowledge needed to face the issues that their students are currently facing.

"With all the tragic events happening in high schools, our pre-meetings…really centered around not just suicide, but the underlying process of it," she said.

The conference lasted a whole day, from 8am to 4:30pm, at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret.

The first half of the conference consisted of panelists who discussed topics related to mental health.

The second half of the conference consisted of team building exercises, work sessions, group discussions, and self-care exercises.

Torres vetoes BOE compensation bill

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres vetoed last Friday a House bill that would have allowed Board of Education members to receive compensation for committee meetings.

In his transmittal message to the 20th Legislature, Torres said that House Bill 20-96, SD1 do not specify where the money will come from.

"While this bill reiterates the board's commendable efforts in providing the Public School System with the support it needs to deliver quality educational services to the children of our Commonwealth, the proposed amendment leaves unanswered the question of how board members are to be compensated for these committee meetings," Torres said.

Presently, Board of Education members are paid for attending only board meetings that are duly noticed under the Open Government Act and pursuant to the rates set forth in the law.

H.B. 20-96, SD1 proposes to suspend the application of the law and other statutes relating to BOE committee meetings—without providing any alternative rate or guideline as to how the committee meetings will be compensated.

"Without such safeguards, the bill may be reasonably construed as authorizing the BOE to determine the proper compensation for the meetings," said Torres.

"Therefore, whereas I agree that these committee meetings are vital to the development of policy and the functioning of [PSS], I must respectfully exercise my constitutional authority to veto this bill until these issues are clarified by the Legislature."

In related news, Torres signed three other bills into law last March 16: Senate Bill 20-24, Senate Bill 20-65, and House Local Bill 20-56

Senate Bill 20-24, SD1, which provides immunity for minors assisting in tobacco control undercover investigations, was authored by Sen. Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan). This bill is now Public Law 20-46.

Senate Bill 20-65, SD1, which establishes a license suspension program for non-custodial parents who are in non-compliance with an order of support, was offered by Sen. Steve K. Mesngon (R-Rota). This bill becomes Public Law 20-47.

House Local Bill 20-56, which reappropriates Saipan local funding for the rental of heavy equipment and operations of the mayor of Saipan, was authored by Rep. Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan). This bill becomes Saipan Local Law 20-22. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

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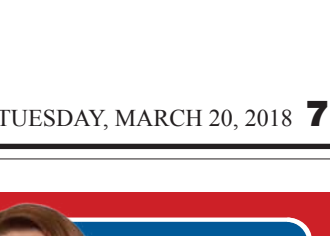

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NMI Democrats: Making the CNMI heard in DC

A delegation of NMI Democrats returned to Saipan last week from Washington, D.C., where they attended the winter conference of the Democratic National Committee last March 8-10, 2018, and met with Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP).

The CNMI Democrats were represented in Washington, D.C., by party chair Daniel O. Quitugua, Democratic National Committeepersons Michael A. White and Nola Hix, CEC member Bobbie Iglesias, and party CEO Stephen C. Woodruff.

"Our goal was to make the people of the CNMI heard at the national level of the Democratic Party, and we succeeded in that goal," Quitugua said. "We had extensive meetings with high-level officials and staff of the national Democratic Party."

The NMI delegation participated in the meetings and activities of the Asian American and Pacific Islanders Caucus, the Western Regional Caucus, the Seniors Council, the Black Caucus, and the LGBT Caucus, as well as the DNC members-only session on Friday and the general session on Saturday.

Noting the NMI's location on the other side of the international dateline, Woodruff told the Western Regional Caucus that the goal of NMI Democrats this year is to "flip the CNMI from red to blue" and for the "Democratic Wave in 2018 to begin in the Northern Mariana Islands."

Woodruff also joined the Executive Directors Meeting in which party CEOs and executive directors from the 50 states and some of the territories participated in discussions of organizational tools and resources to enhance party functions and effectiveness.

The CNMI delegation met briefly with DNC vice chair Michael A. Blake, touched base with Democratic Party chair Tom Perez (formerly Secretary of Labor in the Obama administration), and sat down for intensive discussions with national Democratic Party CEO Mary Beth Cahill.

NMI Democrats pose with Bel Leong-Hong, DNC chair of the Asian American Pacific Islander Caucus.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI Democrats pose with James Roosevelt Jr., DNC co-chair of the Rules and Bylaws Committee.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

NMI Democrats pose with Ken Martin, DNC vice chair and president of the Association of State Democratic Committees.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

The NMI Democrats' first meeting last March 8 in the nation's capitol was with Ken Martin, chairman of the Association of State Delegation Chairs, supported by DNC deputy political director Maureen Garde and staffer Aimee Van Cleave.

The NMI Democrats team also had an extended meeting with Perez's chief of staff, Sam Cornale, and key support staffers in the western region, Aimee Van Cleave and Kristen Avery. These meetings were very productive, and the national party is committed to helping local Democrats attain victory in the upcoming November 2018 general election.

In their meeting with Sablan, Quitugua, White, Iglesias, Woodruff, and Hix discussed the delegate's U.S. Workforce Act, obtaining a copy of the markup from the Senate Natural Resources Committee, and other issues of importance to NMI Democrats and the people of the CNMI.

NMI Democrats extend an open invitation to CNMI citizens to join them in their mission to transform the way the public's business is done in the CNMI.

"If you want to make a difference in the future of CNMI," Quitugua said, "the Democratic Party of the Northern Mariana Islands has a place for you."

"Our goal is to empower the people," Quitugua added. "Politics, done right, is about leadership and service, not power or personal prestige. Good government liberates the people from dependence on the individuals holding office for their personal welfare and that of their families."

Anyone interested in joining this quest as a volunteer, contributor, CEC member, candidate for public office, or simple supporter should contact Quitugua at bdiglesias@hotmail.com or Woodruff at nmidems.ceo@gmail.com. ***(PR)***

Saipan Vegas Resort turns one

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

The Saipan Vegas Resort celebrated its first anniversary and their recent expansion with a two-night event that catered to families, adults, and teens alike.

To commemorate its first successful year, Saipan Vegas Resort held a movie night and a local concert free, both free of admission, over the weekend.

Saipan Vegas Resort is a budget-integrated resort that combines gaming with a golf course.

According to Saipan Vegas Resort general manager Gus Noble, they put up a movie night and a concert because they wanted to celebrate turning one by having fun with the community they have been serving for the past year.

"This was our first anniversary and we wanted to give back to the community a little bit and have some fun… We wanted to give them something to [look forward to]," he said.

Noble said the highlight of the past year was the opportunity for the company to grow, expand their business on Saipan, and being a part of and contributing to the community. Saipan Vegas Resort takes pride in its 100 percent local hired staff.

"It's been a good year… we first built 50 hotel rooms. These are prefab, modular hotel rooms and now we've built another 48 so we have [nearly] 100 rooms," he said.

Saipan Vegas Resort will soon be offering promos for their gamerooms and more.

Noble urges the community to check out Saipan Vegas Resort because they strive to provide their guests with a great time, a great venue, and Saipan hospitality.

Measure to reclaim AMP heads to Senate

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

A House measure to reclaim the American Memorial Park heads to the Senate after the House voted in favor of the bill during a session on Capitol Hill last Friday.

Rep. Donald Barcinas (R-Saipan), author of House Bill 20-152, believes that the local government is capable of maintaining and developing the American Memorial Park instead of the National Park Service, the federal agency that currently has jurisdiction over it.

The bill's intention is to authorize Gov. Ralph DLG Torres to ask the Interior secretary to transfer administration of the park to the CNMI government.

"The CNMI government was able—with the help of federal agencies, of course—to clean the entire CNMI. The American Memorial Park was never cleaned," said Barcinas, recalling the onslaught of Typhoon Soudelor back in August 2015 and emphasizing that the local government could do a better job than the NPS.

He pointed out that the mess left by Typhoon Soudelor at the park was not addressed until Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) asked people to volunteer to clean the area.

Barcinas believes that CNMI residents should be able to use the park without first securing several requirements.

When pointed out that Typhoon Soudelor was a one-time thing and that it would cost the CNMI government more for its upkeep in the long run, Barcinas replied that he embedded within the bill a system that would allow the park to extract revenue from leasing the park.

He added that the money, which is currently with the Marianas Public Land Trust fund, would incur interest that could be used for the maintenance and development of the park.

The legislation now heads to the Senate for review and action.

McDonald's raffle celebrates 25 years in NMI

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

McDonald's Saipan gave away thousands of dollars worth of prizes during its 25th anniversary last Saturday.

Since the beginning of March, with every purchase of an Extra Value Meal, customers were eligible to enter in a raffle draw. Last Saturday, in commemoration of 25 years on Saipan, McDonald's gave away over $1,000 worth of prizes to 25 lucky loyal customers.

The grand raffle draw was held at the McDonald's branch on Middle Road and raffle participants had to be present to win.

It has been 25 years since Jose Ayuyu, McDonald's Saipan and Guam franchise owner, opened the first McDonald's on Saipan on March 18, 1993.

This year's raffle draw took about three hours because many raffle participants were not present.

The minor raffle prizes consisted of gift certificates that ranged from $25 to $100 from Joeten Superstore, DFS Galleria, and McDonald's.

The gift certificate winners were Rommel DelaFlor, Marilou Canilao, Jeanette Sarabia, Wu Yang Ming, Robert Hunter, Jerry Santomin, Merissa Arriola, Luz Buccat, Soledad Cruz, Grace Lapidarin, Evelyn Gutierrez, Steven Connor, and Carmen Pangelinan. Many won multiple gift certificates as a result of their loyalty to McDonald's.

The major raffle prizes were toaster ovens, rice cookers, roundtrip tickets to Guam and Manila, a 55-inch flat screen TV, and a Samsung S8 equipped with a six-month plan.

The top winners were Marilou Canilao, Jeanette Sarabia, Daniel Martinez, Juanita Bandales, Louise Ligaya, and Marissa Ignacio.

McDonald's Middle Road general manager Joe Ayuyu Jr. said he wanted to thank all the loyal customers who have supported and continue to support McDonald's.

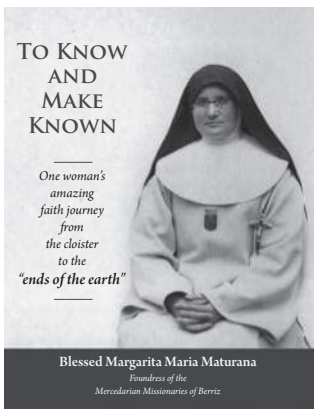
"We did what we wanted and that was to give back to our No. 1 supporters, which is our customers and also our employees," he said.

Ayuyu said the upcoming years for McDonald's will be dedicated to further improvement to ensure the best quality service for their customers.

Book features life of Mercedarian sisters' founder

The book of three Saipan authors—Kathleen H. Arriola, Martha C. Camacho, and Sr. MaryAnn Hartmann, MMB—titled *To Know and Make Known: One woman's amazing faith journey from the cloister to the 'ends of the earth',* will be officially launched and be made available this Wednesday, March 21 at 5:30pm at the Joeten-Daidai Social Hall in Chalan Kanoa.

Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa will present the book.


TO KNOW AND MAKE KNOWN
One woman's amazing faith journey from the cloister to the "ends of the earth"
Blessed Margarita Maria Maturana
Foundress of the Mercedarian Missionaries of Berriz

The book chronicles the life and legacy of Margarita Maria Maturana, who founded the Mercedarian Missionaries of Berriz (Maturana House of Prayer, Navy Hill).

The history of "the Sisters'" presence on Saipan over the past 90 years, which was just celebrated on March 4, is included, as well as 10 translations of the *Novena for the Sick Through the Intercession of Blessed Margarita.*

That evening, the book will be available for a suggested contribution of $15, which covers printing and shipping costs. After that night, copies of the book can be obtained from the nuns at Maturana. ***(PR)***

Deadline to join Project Prom Saipan on Mar. 20

The deadline for Saipan high school juniors and seniors to apply to join Project Prom is 11:59pm on Tuesday, March 20, 2018.

The Project Prom program is part of Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence's awareness and outreach efforts related to Sexual Assault Awareness Month, which is in April. The program works to educate high school juniors and seniors on the issue of sexual violence and how they can be part of prevention efforts in addition to helping them receive items and/or services for their prom.

The Project Prom Advocacy Workshop for Saipan will be on Friday, March 23, 2018, from 10am to 2pm at the Pacific Islands Club's Charley's Cabaret. Those selected to attend will be updated and notified via email and/or phone.

Those interested in joining Project Prom may apply by submitting an essay answering the following questions "In your own words, how do you define sexual violence? What does advocacy mean to you? How will you advocate against sexual violence to your peers? Give examples." The essay must be 300 words minimum.

Essay submissions must also include the following information: applicant's full name, school attending, grade level, age, gender, contact number(s), and email address.

To submit essays, applicants may email info@endviolencenmi.org as an MS Word document, as a PDF, or within the body of the email. Applicants may also turn in essays to the NMCADSV main office in Springs Plaza located along Middle Road during regular hours of operation (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm).

Sponsors of Project Prom 2018 include the CNMI Youth Affairs Office and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corp.'s Community Guidance Center-Substance Abuse Prevention Services Unit, who are also offering participants the opportunity to be part of their project to develop public service announcement that raise awareness on sexual violence and underage drinking.

For more information on Project Prom for Saipan and Rota, contact the Northern Marianas Coalition Against Domestic & Sexual Violence at (670) 234-3878, email info@endviolencenmi.org, or visit www.facebook.com/EndViolenceNMI. ***(PR)***

Women's summit next week

The CNMI Women's Association and Women's Affairs Office is set to hold a two-day Women's Summit at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. Themed "Press For [Continued] Progress," the summit will be on March 26 and March 27, from 7:30am to 4pm on both days.

The maiden summit was held in 2013 with close to 100 women from all walks of life participating in the panel presentations and discussions.

Felicidad T. Ogumoro, summit chair and administrator of the CNMI Women's Association, said the summit seeks to highlight the CWA's mission, which is to ensure that women are fully engaged in the political, economic, and social development of the CNMI. It is also in line with this month's celebration of Women's Month. The event takes place annually at the end of March as part of the CNMI's celebration CNMI Women's Month. Topics to be discussed include women and the following themes: health, education, faith, public service, employment and economy, and culture.

Registration is ongoing until Wednesday, March 21, 2018. You may call 233-9411 or email commonwealthwomenassociation@gmail.com to register. Registration forms can also be accessed online at https://www.facebook.com/cnmiwomen/ or in-person at the Garapan Community Development Center.

The 5th Annual Women's Summit is sponsored by the CNMI Women's Association and the Women's Affairs Office, and is partially funded by the Community Services Block Grant, a sub-grant awarded by the Division of Youth Services through funds under the Office of Community Services, Department of Health and Human Services. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
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P.O. Box 501220 CK Saipan, MP 96950-1220
Telephone: (670) 664-4282
Facsimile: (670) 235-5131

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to the Open Government Act (1 CMC §9901 et seq), the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation ("CUC") Board of Directors hereby informs the general public that the March 6, 2018 regular meeting which was originally recessed and continued to March 22, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., has been rescheduled to continue on April 3, 2018, at 10:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the CUC Conference Room, Room 17, 3rd Floor, Joeten Dandan. Public attendance is welcome

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MVA-RFP-18-2011
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
Submission /Closing Date: March 29, 2018 Time: 3:00 p.m.

For: Local Public Relations and Media Services

Submit sealed proposals to: Marianas Visitors Authority, Procurement Office
San Jose Professional Building, Beach Rd., San Jose
P.O. Box 500861, Saipan, MP 96950

Interested parties may pick up the Scope of Work on or after **February 26, 2018**, at the **Marianas Visitors Authority Office, San Jose Professional Building, Beach Road, San Jose, Saipan**, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Proposals submitted from individuals outside the Commonwealth must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or certified courier services by **March 29, 2018**, and must be received within seven (7) working days of that date. Proposers from outside the Commonwealth must notify the MVA/ Mr. David B. Muna in writing of their intent to submit a proposal in order to receive the additional seven (7) days for the receipt of the actual Proposal Documents. Participants outside the **Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands** must submit a **Notice of Intent** by any mode of written communication including facsimile at+1-670-664-3237 or email to dmuna@mymarianas.com, and must be received by 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on **March 29, 2018**.

All questions regarding this RFP must be sent to Mr. David B. Muna at dmuna@mymarianas.com or faxed to +1-670-664-3237, **no later than 5 p.m. Chamorro Standard Time on March 15, 2018.**

/s/ Gloria C. Cavanagh
Chairperson, Board of Directors

/s/ Christopher A. Concepcion
Managing Director

Northern Marianas College
P.O. Box 501250 CK, Saipan, MP 96950
Phone: (670) 237-6858/6855 • Fax: (670) 235-3696
Website: http://www.marianas.edu

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcement No. 17-042
Position Title: Dean, Institutional Effectiveness
Department: Office of Institutional Effectiveness
Pay Level & Step: Executive Grade 02/Steps 01-02
Annual Salary: $60,000 - $62,100
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: July 31, 2017 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Re-Announcement (Amendment) No. 17-044
Position Title: Specialty Instructor-Professor, Nursing
Department: Nursing
Pay Level & Step: 27/03, 29/01, 30/01, 31/01
Annual Salary: $46,265.08 - $53,604.43
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: February 09, 2018 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Re-Announcement (Amendment) No. 17-052
Position Title: Department Chair, Languages & Humanities
Department: Languages & Humanities
Pay Level & Step: 36/Steps 01-02
Annual Salary: $51,528.98 - $53,332.49
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: February 09, 2018 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Re-Announcement (Amendment) No. 18-002
Position Title: Director, Community Development Institute
Department: Community Development Institute
Pay Level & Step: 25/Steps 01-02
Annual Salary: $49,864.16 - $51,609.41
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: February 06, 2018 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Announcement No. 18-008
Position Title: Vice President of Learning & Student Success
Department: Learning & Student Success
Annual Salary: $85,000
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: March 02, 2018 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Announcement No. 18-010
Position Title: Dean of Learning & Student Success
Department: Learning & Student Success
Pay Level & Step: Executive Grade 02/Step 01
Annual Salary: $60,000
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: March 02, 2018 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Announcement No. 18-009
Position Title: Vice President of Administration & Advancement
Department: Administration & Advancement
Annual Salary: $85,000
Location: As Terlaje Campus, Saipan
Opening Date: March 06, 2018 **Closing Date: Until Filled**

Applications must be submitted by 4:30 pm on the closing date. If there are no qualified applicants or the set of qualified applicants is deemed an insufficient pool, the closing date will be extended for two-week periods for further submission and review of applications until the search is closed. Deadlines that fall on a non-business day will be extended to the next business day. All salaries are subject to availability of funds. The College is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Student march another step in growing movement for gun control

One month ago, Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School students ran outside with arms up after surviving a shooting that killed 17 people and injured 17 others.

On Wednesday, the Parkland survivors marched out of school again—this time with students nationwide showing their support by doing the same thing.

The students marched out in memory of those who died and to protest politicians who refuse to do something about the availability of military-style assault weapons, which make mass killings so easy.

They marched out to show the growth of their movement, which in just one month, managed to loosen the National Rifle Association's grip on the Florida Legislature and secure the state's first new gun regulations in decades.

And they marched out to show that America's kids are fed up with the inability of their elders to do something about gun violence.

Their call for change will sound again next week—on an even larger scale—when the Parkland students lead a march on Washington, D.C.

There, they will face political obstacles more daunting than the roadblocks they overcame in Tallahassee.

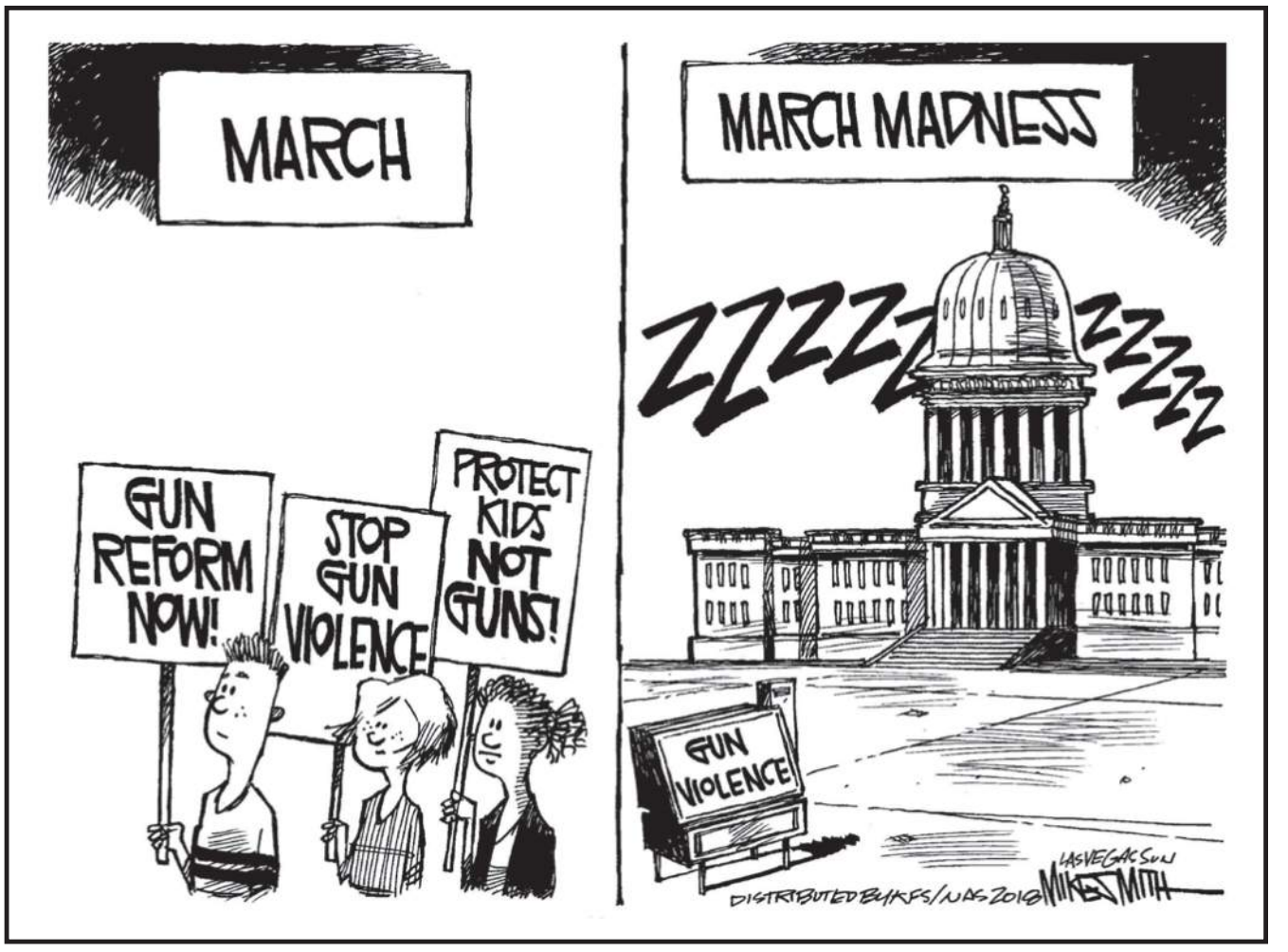
The timing of the Parkland shooting—during the state legislative session and in an election year—forced Florida lawmakers to approve modest changes to the state's gun laws. It is shameful that lawmakers did nothing after 49 largely gay and Hispanic young people were similarly massacred at Orlando's Pulse nightclub two years ago.

It's a welcome change that Florida now requires people who want to buy rifles and shotguns to be at least 21 and wait three days before taking possession. The new law also outlaws bump-stocks and lets police officers confiscate guns from people considered dangerous. Plus, there's money for hardening schools and mental health screenings.

But lawmakers refused to listen to the students—or the families of the victims—when it came to banning high-velocity, semi-automatic assault-style rifles, the weapon of choice for mass killers.

When student marchers descend on the nation's capital, they will face members of Congress who will similarly refuse to listen. Sadly, that lineup includes Florida's junior senator, Marco Rubio, who more than protecting kids from people with assault weapons, speaks loudest for protecting people's right to buy any kind of weapon they want. After the shooting, Rubio initially said he would favor raising the minimum age to purchase an assault rifle to 21 and restricting the size of magazines for firearms. But once he returned to Washington, he changed his mind.HLike Rubio, too many politicians treat access to military-style rifles and high-capacity magazines as a Second Amendment birthright. But rifles like the AR-15 are meant for war, not hunting or

See STUDENT on Next Page



Rex Tillerson was an odd fit from the start

By DOYLE MCMANUS
Los Angeles Times

Doyle McManus is a columnist for The Los Angeles Times. *Readers may send him email at doyle.mcmanus@latimes.com*

The mystery isn't why Rex Tillerson was fired this week. It's why he lasted so long.

Tillerson, a thoroughly conventional conservative who became secretary of state on the strength of a career negotiating oil deals for Exxon, was out of step with his boss from the start.

He was a George W. Bush Republican in a Donald Trump world. His chief sponsors were Bush aides, Condoleezza Rice and Robert M. Gates. He was the embodiment of the theory that Trump would "pivot" toward traditional GOP policies after his inauguration. But the pivot never happened.

That left Trump and Tillerson at odds on major issues. Trump's version of "America First" views international alliances as costly encumbrances; Tillerson wanted to preserve them. Trump wanted to tear up Barack Obama's 2015 nuclear deal with Iran; Tillerson wanted to keep it. Trump pulled the United States out of the Paris agreement on climate change; Tillerson wanted to stay in.

If that weren't enough, Tillerson was simply bad at his job. Instead of focusing on diplomacy, he spent much of his time redesigning the State Department bureaucracy and offering to cut his own budget.

Tillerson's defenders said he was a voice for moderation, and he was—but an ineffective one. Trump undercut him relentlessly, dismissed his attempts to negotiate a deal with North Korea as useless, and finally took over the effort himself.

Nor did Tillerson ever sincerely attempt to win over his boss on a personal level. When NBC reported that Tillerson had privately called Trump a "moron," the secretary of State denounced the report—but never quite denied it.

Rumors began circulating almost six months ago that Trump was ready to fire his ill-fitting secretary of State. The reports even named the most likely successor: CIA Director Mike Pompeo.

So Tillerson's dismissal came as the least surprising, and least graceful, firing in recent political history—the first time a president has ever fired a Cabinet member on Twitter.

The clumsy episode revived a perennial question: Can anyone who agrees to serve Trump escape without serious damage to his reputation?

Pompeo is about to find out.

On the surface, the former tea party congressman from Kansas looks like the anti-Tillerson. Tillerson is taciturn, understated and imperious. Pompeo is swaggering, loquacious and brashly hard line.

The CIA, he said last year, "must be aggressive, vicious ... (and) focused on crushing our enemies."

He's won Trump's heart the same way Defense Secretary James N. "Mad Dog" Mattis did, by sounding like a take-no-prisoners tough guy.

Pompeo is clearly more hawkish than Tillerson, especially on Iran. After Trump's election, then-Congressman Pompeo said he looked forward "to rolling back this disastrous deal with the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism." He has accused American Muslim leaders of being "potentially complicit" in domestic terrorism.

But Pompeo, who learned international politics at West Point and graduated from Harvard Law School, is also quite capable of nuance and revision.

Once installed at the CIA, he acknowledged that the Iran deal had put the United States "in a marginally better place" because it allowed international inspections of nuclear facilities.

On North Korea, he believes that it may be impossible to force Kim Jong Un to dismantle his nuclear force immediately, and that the United States should pursue the "secondary goal" of stopping nuclear tests.

And he has endorsed the intelligence community's view that Russia's Vladimir Putin meddled in the 2016 election and is trying to meddle again—an unusual break from the president. He has consistently argued that Russia is a bigger threat than Trump seems to think.

So it's not clear that Pompeo's ascent means a major shift in foreign policy. Instead, it likely means a more effective Trump foreign policy—one with the State Department inside the circle of decision-makers, instead of outside.

Long before this week, Trump wasn't listening to Tillerson; he was listening to Pompeo, who often delivered the president's morning intelligence briefing in person.

The question for Pompeo, now that he is getting the most important job in the Cabinet, is how he will define his role. Will he be Trump's enabler—or will he try to restrain the president's undiplomatic impulses, as Tillerson tried to do? Will he submit to Trump's worst instincts? Or will he tell the president when he's wrong?

And will Trump listen?

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

SNAP benefits vital to low-income communities

By CAROLINE MEEHAN
THE BALTIMORE SUN

President Donald Trump's fiscal year 2019 budget request has me worried for the future health and well-being of our nation's low-income communities. Under this proposal, there is to be an immediate $17 billion reduction to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, followed by a $213.5 billion reduction over the next 10 years.

There are over 40 million people who receive SNAP. Not only does SNAP help families put food on the table, it also provides economic benefits. According to the USDA, every $5 in new SNAP benefits generates $9 in economic activity. SNAP benefits are being spent at farmers' markets, large-chain supermarkets, local groceries and corner stores all throughout America. Many farmers' markets allow recipients to "double their dollar" when using SNAP benefits, enabling participants to eat fresh fruits and vegetables and support local farms in their communities.

The proposal to replace SNAP with "America's harvest box," a box of "shelf-stable" canned and boxed goods, for those households receiving over $90 per month, is perplexing and concerning to say the least. Taking away one's power to choose one product over another, for instance, disrupts a person's powerful connection with food, it disrupts a family's ability to make their favorite dish for Sunday night dinner or to try a new vegetable. Sending a box of canned foods does not allow a person the choice between fresh, frozen or canned produce. Additionally, canned foods are often high in sodium, which may also pose difficulty for people who need to follow a low-sodium diet.

SNAP is not perfect, but combined with the nutritional education on how to eat healthy on a budget, I believe SNAP can be used effectively to help sustain nutritional status and improve overall health. Nutrition education is essential in improving the health of low-income communities, which is where SNAP education _ or "SNAP-ed," the nutrition education component of SNAP _ comes into play. SNAP-ed can help SNAP recipients make healthier decisions with these funds, make the most of each dollar and understand importance of eating a well-balanced diet. In Maryland, for example, the Text2BeHealthy program, a healthy text messaging service to promote healthy eating behaviors, developed under SNAP-ed, reaches over 2,000 parents annually. According to their fiscal year 2016 report, over 20,000 low-income youth participants in Maryland received nutrition education through Maryland's SNAP-ed.

Another key nutrition education program under the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Child Nutrition Program, is proposed to receive a $1.1 billion reduction in funds. Having previously worked as a nutrition educator on the USDA Summer Food Service Program in Philadelphia, which helps low-income children receive meals during the summer months, I know firsthand the positive impact that these programs can have on hundreds of families. Research shows that children affected by food insecurity may have more problems with academics, emotional and behavioral health. Given that research also shows food and beverage ads to be more prevalent in lower-income neighborhoods, education on healthy behaviors that start during childhood is essential.

Without these programs to educate on the importance of choosing nutrient-dense foods and healthy eating on a budget, fruits, vegetables and lean proteins are typically not at the top of the grocery list. People often turn to the processed snacks high in sodium and added sugar. This in turn is contributing to the alarming prevalence of obesity, diabetes and heart disease in communities. I believe reductions in the SNAP budget and elimination of SNAP-ed will worsen this epidemic and increase food insecurity, hunger and poverty. In the health care setting, we will see more patients come into clinics and hospital emergency rooms with worsening, uncontrolled diet-related diseases. Research shows the correlation between food insecurity and increased health care costs.

SNAP benefits and nutrition education programs, including but not limited to SNAP-ed and the Child Nutrition Program, are vital to help improve the health of low-income neighborhoods throughout America. We need these programs to continue receiving adequate funding; the public health of lower-income communities is at stake.

Caroline Meehan is a registered dietitian nutritionist in Baltimore. She wrote this for the Baltimore Sun.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The CNMI's loss is Florida's gain

Former CNMI teacher John Raulerson continues his winning ways at Florida's Oak Ridge High. The headlines read: "High school teacher gets results with engineering, design team championship" "Oak Ridge High School team prepares to represent state in design challenge."

Raulerson has now won seven straight state level competitions and two national titles with his students in engineering designs. Yes, this is the former teacher at MHS who was "fired without cause."

I tried to correct this obvious flaw in the way we treat employees of our school system but the former ACT group sided with the Board of Education to fight me. I guess PSS still hasn't learned that it is wrong to fire people for no reason; their mistakes are coming back to haunt them.

It was really a crime against our students for Raulerson to have been fired for no reason. The CNMI, especially PSS, really needs to take note of Mr. Raulerson, who was spotlighted on the local news as "This week›s getting results award winner," as Raulerson and his team were announced as Florida's state champions of the Real World Design Challenge earlier this year. The competition challenges public and private high school students to use core STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) principles and apply them to workplace problems.

Raulerson›s classroom is an after-school gathering place for team members nearly obsessed with the idea of perfecting their project.

Raulerson said: «We get a problem and we solve it. Then we move on to the next one. The kids worked hard. I just call this a team a think tank.»

Just to show readers the importance of his work, Raulerson said: «We›re coming up with an aircraft system that is going to be very, very economic. It›s going to help farmers spray and take care of their fields.»

There is no teacher in PSS who is teaching engineering and inspiring students to become astronauts. The CNMI really lost a great one in Raulerson and I'm writing this in hopes that it will never ever happen again, especially when PSS continues to have a teacher shortage and each member of the winning national team will receive $50,000 in scholarship money.

The Oak Ridge Real World Design Challenge team competes in Washington, D.C. next month but the CNMI no longer even has a team! It should also be noted that Raulerson will be teaching engineering next year when PSS has yet to even have an engineering program. I guess PSS thinks we will keep getting CW engineers and never mind our own children.

The problem of race

Race is still a real issue in the CNMI as all Raulerson ever wanted was respect and the opportunity to compete for the Teacher of the Year, which he made known to his principal but he was always overlooked and even cheated out of being in the competition. I know that one teacher who was MHS' Teacher of the Year stated that "it should have been Raulerson" but that's just how it is in the CNMI when you are not local and you speak up. You get blackballed like I have been for years by PSS and some government officials. Raulerson was replaced to only teach math, which speaks volumes of the problem.

I have also witnessed this prejudice by PSS. A board member said I could not write a textbook because I was not local! Heck, I was told that I am not qualified anymore to be a Title 1 teacher simply because I complained about a payment process of the program. But a former Board Member who was and still may be a Title 1 teacher literally "assaulted" a student at Garapan Elementary but it was hushed up and she was not terminated and may still be a Title 1 teacher today.

The problem at PSS is old and deeply rooted in the behavior of the leadership as the board even fought against my textbook that received great reviews and a resolution from both houses of the Legislature.

The CNMI has a real problem when it comes to letting non-locals be leaders, especially blacks as PSS seldom ever recruits a black person unless they are a specialist. People like Raulerson and myself are small in numbers, so we are treated very much like we are the enemy by the power brokers when we are only trying to help. But it will surely come back to haunt PSS and the CNMI, just like Raulerson's accomplishments have done.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

Laughingstock of the free world

In reorganizing his Cabinet, it seems President Trump's replacement nominees need replacing! We've truly become the laughingstock of the free world and it's just plain embarrassing!

Herb Stark
Mooresville, NC

STUDENT

From Page 10

target practice. Their high-velocity bullets are far more lethal than those from semi-automatic handguns. They pulverize body parts and leave doctors little to repair.

The divide over sensible gun reforms is not just a Red vs. Blue issue, either. When Democrats controlled both houses of Congress early in President Obama's first term, they failed to change anything. And while Democrats claimed a narrow—and politically sea-changing—victory in a Pennsylvania congressional race Tuesday, the winner, Conor Lamb, doesn't support an assault weapons ban. So getting Congress to reinstate the assault weapons ban lifted in 2004, or even take the modest steps approved in Florida, would take a political miracle.

This nation is ready for a miracle.

About 66 percent of Americans support stricter gun laws, according to a recent poll released by Quinnipiac University. And 67 percent support a ban on assault weapons.

That support was evidenced Wednesday in social media posts, tweets and comments as students marched out of their classrooms.

"Proud of every kid who walked out to make change today, and mourning every child who didn't get to make this decision because of an assault rifle," wrote Lisa Getter Peterson on Facebook.

"I find it amusing that people bemoan that today's youth are lazy and selfish, and the moment they stand up and take action, they are criticized for being 'manipulated and exploited,'" replied Ellen Livingston.

Some trolls went online to tell the "Tide-pod eaters" to get back to class. But their negativity was countered by those who find hope in the students.

The student's movement reminds us of the students of yesteryear, whose protests helped bring an end to the Vietnam War. It also reminds us of the civil rights marchers, who proudly took their seats at the lunch counter and refused to sit at the back of the bus. It also reminds us of the young people of the Arab Spring, who harnessed the power of social media to topple military dictators.

So on they go to Washington on March 24. And on they go to voter registration drives—a big slew of them, we hope. And on they go to collecting signatures for a constitutional amendment drive to ban assault weapons in Florida.

And on they go to November's elections, when we will count on them to help deliver the change we seek.

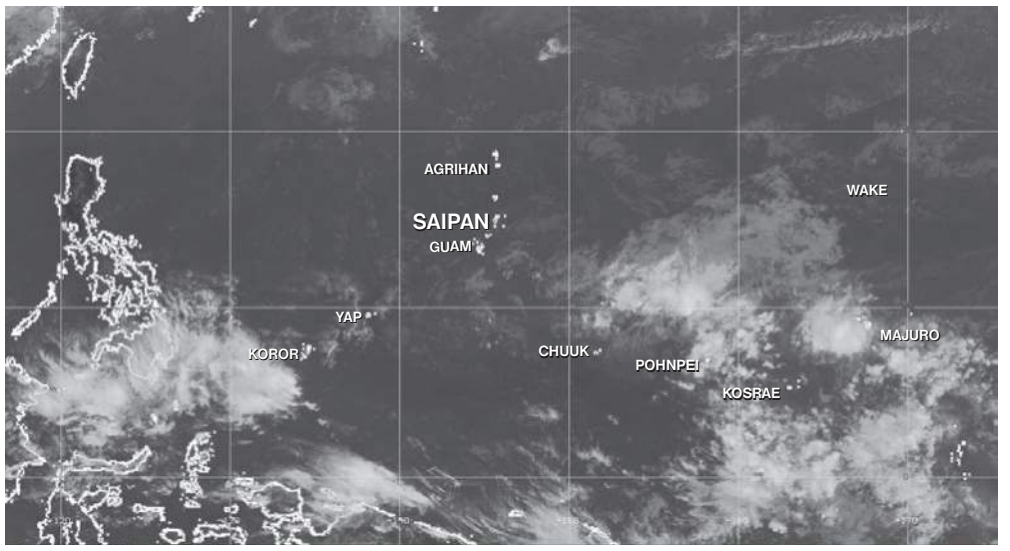
(c)2018 *Sun Sentinel (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.)*

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy. Scattered showers.	Partly sunny with isolated showers.
▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲89° ▼77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:00 AM, MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

The dry weather pattern looks to continue for at least a few more days with the trade wind regime in place until midweek. The guidance has trended drier this cycle around the middle of the week as a tropical disturbance to our south is weaker and slower. Therefore, I have made Thursday just isolated showers for now. The tropical disturbance is still forecast to move westward and some guidance has it strengthening a bit as it moves by south of Guam. However, the latest guidance is slower with the motion and there is still some uncertainty with the track, as the ECMWF is further north than the GFS. Nevertheless, with the slower motion it does appear that the best chances of scattered showers would come Friday and possibly into Saturday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	86° / 77°
Palau	Mostly Cloudy	86° / 77°
Yap	Partly Cloudy	86° / 78°
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	86° / 80°
Pohnpei	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°
Kosrae	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	83° / 78°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 61°
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	54° / 30°
Hong Kong	Rain	70° / 57°
Honolulu	Cloudy	79° / 72°
London	Cloudy	46° / 34°
Los Angeles	Showers	67° / 57°
Manila	Mostly Sunny	93° / 79°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	77° / 52°
Miami	Windy	87° / 67°
New York	Partly Cloudy	42° / 36°
Osaka	Rain	48° / 48°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	46° / 28°
Busan	Rain	45° / 36°
Rome	Rain	55° / 43°
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	70° / 39°
San Francisco	Rain	61° / 50°
Seoul	Cloudy	45° / 34°
Tokyo	Rain	48° / 45°
Washington, DC	Mixed	40° / 33°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
3:32 AM	LOW TIDE	0.36
9:27 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.94
3:58 PM	LOW TIDE	0.26
9:59 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.88

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:22 AM	6:27 PM
Wednesday	6:20 AM	6:27 PM
Thursday	6:20 AM	6:28 PM
Friday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM
Saturday	6:18 AM	6:28 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	8:13 am	8:53 pm	-
Wednesday	8:58 am	9:49 pm	-
Thursday	9:46 am	10:47 pm	-
Friday	10:36 am	11:46 pm	-
Saturday	11:31 am	-	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA6394	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA6392	8:40am	9:30am	Daily
UA6391	1:30pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7 via Rota
UA6390	2:20pm	3:10pm	2, 3, 6
UA6398	6:05pm	6:55pm	Daily
UA6396	9:50pm	10:40pm	Daily

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA6391	1:30pm	2:05pm	1, 4, 5, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA6391	2:35pm	3:10pm	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL297	4:20pm	7:15pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:10am	6:10am	1, 7
7C3451	4:00am	7:05am	4, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

TW308	2:00am	6:05am	Daily
OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
LJ652	3:40am	7:30am	1, 4, 5, 7
7C3403	4:45am	8:30am	Daily
7C3401	4:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	5:40am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	12:00pm	1
JD396	4:50pm	10:00pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:20am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ626/701	2:10am	10:55am	1 via ICN
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:55am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA6394/191	4:15am	9:00am	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	8:10am	7 via GUM
UA6394/PR111	4:15am	9:20am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA6398/183	6:05pm	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA6398/193	6:05pm	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA6398/159	6:05pm	11:00pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA6393	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA6395	7:15am	8:05am	Daily
UA6391	12:10pm	1:00pm	1, 4, 5, 7
UA6390	12:10pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6 via Rota
UA6397	4:45pm	5:35pm	Daily
UA6399	8:30pm	9:20pm	Daily

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA6390	12:10pm	12:45pm	2, 3, 6

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA6390	1:15pm	1:50pm	2, 3, 6

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:30am	3:05pm	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:00pm	2:10am+1	4
7C3452	9:05pm	2:10am+1	3, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	9:30am	3:00pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
TW307	7:45pm	1:00am+1	Daily
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
LJ651	9:10pm	2:40am+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:30am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:25am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:55pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:40pm	3:00am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:25pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/6395	12:40am	8:05am	3, 6 via GUM
UA190/6397	9:55am	5:35pm	2, 3, 6, 7 via GUM
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/625	12:25pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
PR110/UA6395	10:05pm	8:05am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/6395	10:30pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via ROR-GUM
UA184/6395	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/6395	11:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, LJ Jin Air, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

YOUR OFFICE COACH

By MARIE G. MCINTYRE
Tribune News Service

Marie G. McIntyre is a workplace coach and the author of Secrets to Winning at Office Politics. Send in questions and get free coaching tips at http://www.yourofficecoach.com, or follow her on Twitter @officecoach.

Passive-aggressive hints won't work on office blowhard

Q During staff meetings, one of my coworkers can't seem to stop talking. "Megan" dominates every discussion with a detailed rehash of previous topics and an obsessive focus on minor details. Our manager allows her to ramble on without doing anything about it.

Our last meeting ended an hour late after Megan resurrected several issues which had been settled the previous month. When I gently teased her about being long-winded, she reacted badly and didn't take the hint. Although I like Megan, her endless jabbering makes me want to run screaming from the room. How can we get her to stop?

A There is really no nice way to tell Megan to shut up. And as you have discovered, passive-aggressive hints are usually neither effective nor well-received. Recipients tend to be offended by both the message and the gutless way it was delivered.

Therefore, you need to shift your focus from changing the person to solving the problem. Given the leadership vacuum left by your wimpy boss, someone needs to guide these meetings in the right direction. So here are a few strategies you might try.

For each agenda item, determine the specific decisions that must be made. When Megan begins to digress, acknowledge her contribution, then refocus on the decision: "Megan makes a very interesting point. However, I believe our next step is to identify possible vendors. Does anyone have ideas about that?"

To avoid recycling old topics, summarize conclusions at the end of each meeting: "As I understand it, we've agreed to hold the workshop in July, review the travel policy, and interview two possible vendors. Is that correct?" Confirm this with a follow-up email and copy your boss. If an issue resurfaces, remind everyone of their previous agreement.

As a last resort, schedule an appointment immediately after the meeting. This will justify your desire to move things along: "I hate to interrupt, but unfortunately I have to leave at 3:00, so could we finish the discussion of the travel policy?" This strategy has the added benefit of providing a legitimate escape route.

Q The family business where I work always has a scheduled shut-down in July. During that week, the owners require us to take vacation time. When December rolls around, they insist that we use any remaining vacation to cover our pay. I want to know whether this is legal and how to stop it.

A Not being a lawyer, I can't provide legal advice. But I will say that vacation is generally viewed as a benefit, not a right, so employers are typically able to decide when, how, and whether to provide it.

Many companies require vacation to be taken at certain times, especially when periodic closures are necessary for business reasons. Also, employers often limit the number of vacation hours which can be accrued, so that restriction would not be unusual.

When you say that vacation must be used "to cover our pay," I'm not exactly sure what you mean. However, many state and federal laws govern pay practices, so some of them might apply. For a definitive legal opinion, consult a labor attorney who practices in your state.

Zhou Xiaochuan, governor of the People's Bank of China speaks during a press conference held on the sidelines of the annual meeting of China's National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing, Friday, March 9, 2018. AP

China appoints US-trained central banker

A U.S.-trained economist was appointed Monday to succeed the longtime governor of China's central bank, Zhou Xiaochuan, at a time when the ruling Communist Party is trying to reduce financial risks and surging debt.

The appointment of Yi Gang, a veteran deputy central banker, to head the People's Bank of China was in a slate of promotions approved by China's ceremonial legislature of finance and economic officials as President Xi Jinping tightens control over government.

Also Monday, the National People's Congress endorsed the elevation of Liu He, Xi's economic adviser, to a post as vice premier, where he is expected to oversee economic reform.

The ruling Communist Party is under pressure to control surging debt, defuse mounting trade tensions with Washington and Europe and make the cooling, state-dominated economy more productive. It has promised to open more industries to private and foreign competition but business groups and reform advocates complain Beijing is moving too slowly.

The NPC endorsed the appointment of Zhong Shan to a second term as commerce minister. Liu Kun was named finance minister.

Yi, 60, is well known to foreign investors and foreign regulators as head of China's foreign exchange regulator. He has overseen efforts to make the mechanism that sets the exchange rate for China's tightly controlled yuan more market-oriented.

Yi received his Ph.D. from the University of Illinois and taught at Indiana University. He also has a degree in business administration from Hamline University in Minnesota.

"Highly regarded in the international circles and seen as a pragmatic reformist, Yi Gang's appointment is set to ensure policy continuity and a smooth transition," said Mizuho Bank in a report.

Zhou, who is retiring after a record 15 years in the post, is the most prominent Chinese figure in global finance. At 70, he is well beyond official retirement age but stayed on following the 2012 handover of power to a new generation of leaders under President Xi Jinping in what was seen as an effort to reassure companies and financial markets of stability.

Beijing is trying to rein in surging debt that prompted international ratings agencies to cut its credit rating last year. The Communist Party has declared controlling financial risk a priority this year.

Zhou warned in October that rising debt could have a "severe impact" on the economy but said last week regulators believed they had debt under control.

The central bank governor's formal powers are limited despite the post's high profile. Unlike central banks of other major economies, the People's Bank doesn't make monetary policy. Instead, its mission is to carry out policy made by an official body the identity of whose members is secret.

The People's Bank is widely seen as an advocate of conventional, market-oriented economics. ***(AP)***

BUSINESS BRIEFS

German economy minister heads to US with trade war looming

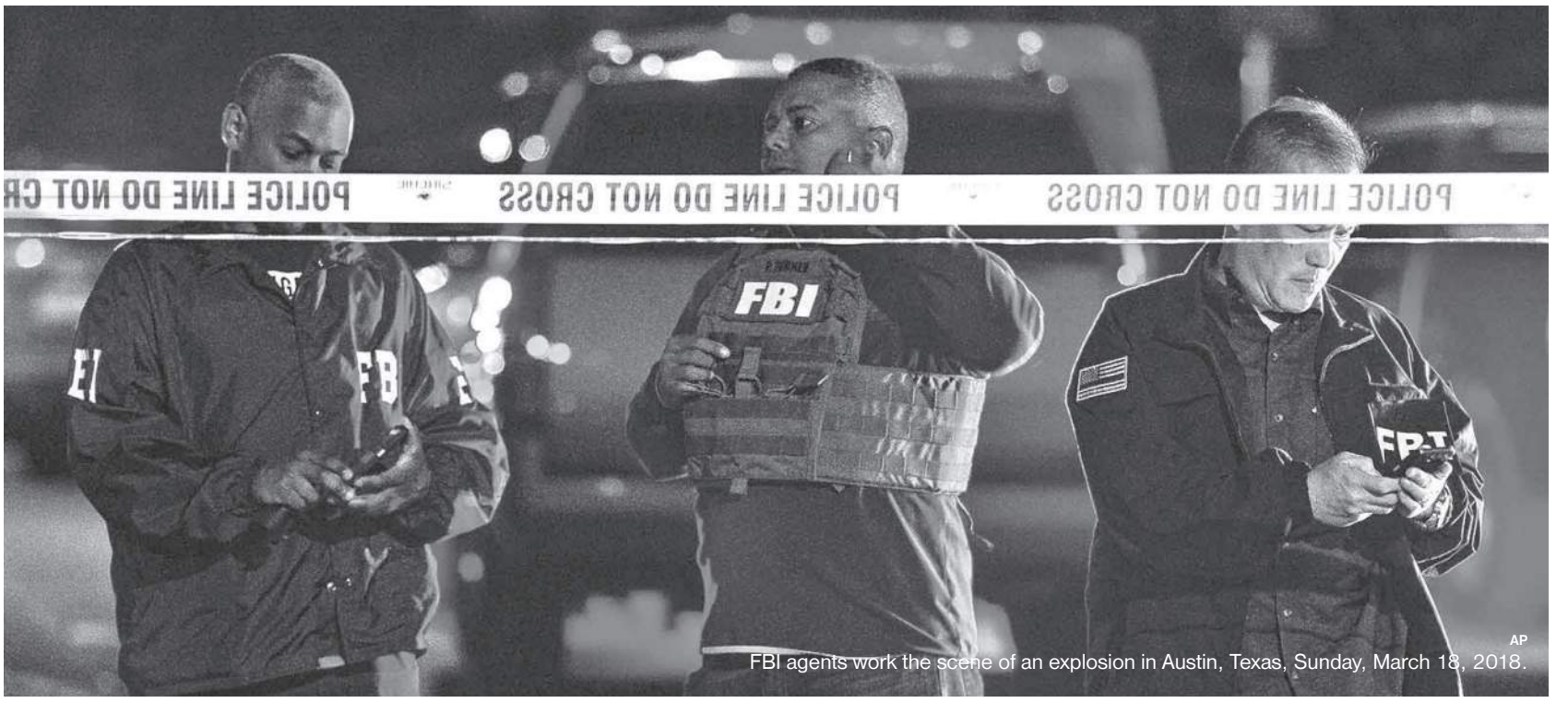
BERLIN (AP)—Germany's economy minister is heading to Washington with the message that American tariffs on European steel and aluminum could prompt a trade war, which would be in nobody's interest. Before leaving Sunday, Economy Minister Peter Altmaier told ARD television he wanted to prevent a "spiral" of measures and countermeasures. He says "I don't want a trade war to develop between Europe and the USA." The European Union has already published a list of American products it plans to tax if it is not exempted from the tariffs announced by President Donald Trump. The EU says it follows fair trade practices and the problem is with China's overproduction. Altmaier said Germany and the U.S. should both be able to produce steel competitively without others selling it at "dumping prices."

Greenpeace says brands refusing to reveal palm oil sources

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—Greenpeace says household brands including PepsiCo and Johnson & Johnson are refusing to disclose where they get their palm oil from despite vows to stop buying from companies that cut down tropical forests to grow the widely used commodity. The environmental group said Monday it had in January asked 16 major brands to reveal their suppliers of palm oil, which is mainly grown in Indonesia and Malaysia and used in a slew of consumer products from snacks to cosmetics. It said eight disclosed the information and eight refused. Separately, Greenpeace said consumer goods companies are "way off track" in meeting a 2010 commitment to remove deforestation-linked palm oil from their supply chains by 2020. It said, "corporate commitments and polices have proliferated, but companies have largely failed to implement them."

Nation

Another explosion injures 2 in Austin, Texas; cause unclear



AP
FBI agents work the scene of an explosion in Austin, Texas, Sunday, March 18, 2018.

AUSTIN, Texas (AP)—Two people were injured in another explosion in Texas' capital Sunday night, after three package bombs detonated earlier this month in other areas of the city and killed two people and injured two others.

Austin-Travis County Emergency Management Services reported that an explosion in southwest Austin injured two men in their 20s who were hospitalized with injuries that didn't appear to be life-threatening.

There was no immediate word on what caused the blast or if it was related to the previous ones. Those blasts began when a package bomb exploded at an east Austin home on March 2, killing a 39-year-old man.

Two more package bombs then exploded March 12, killing a 17-year-old, wounding his mother and injuring a 75-year-old woman.

Sunday's explosion occurred far from the first three blasts, which happened in separate, suburban neighborhoods in the eastern part of the city.

Police blocked entrances to the neighborhood where Sunday's blast occurred and put up yellow tape about half a mile from the home where it happened. They urged those living nearby to stay in their homes.

Despite that order, neighbors milled around just outside the tape, but they said they hadn't seen or heard much. FBI agents were conducting interviews with some of them.

The latest explosion came hours after authorities raised the reward by $50,000 for information leading to the arrest of whoever is responsible for the first three explosions. It now totals $115,000.

Austin police Chief Brian Manley has said the earlier three bombings are related and could be crimes of hatred, but that investigators have not ruled out any possible motive or any clear idea "what the ideology is behind this."

Manley said more than 500 officers, including agents from the FBI and other federal agencies, have conducted 236 interviews in following up on 435 leads.

Bridge collapse: Seconds separated those who lived and died

MIAMI (AP)—They had just finished up lunch, and set off to run a humdrum errand: a drive to the travel agency to pick up airline tickets for their annual visit to their beloved homeland Cuba.

Osvaldo Gonzalez and Alberto Arias, friends and business partners, happened to pass under a Miami bridge that Thursday afternoon, the road bustling with fellow drivers also out on the most ordinary and unthreatening of life's tasks.

A teenager was driving her friend to the doctor's office to pick up some medicine. A father of three was heading home from work. A woman on her way to a nail salon was stopped at a red light. Seconds—inches—would soon separate those who would live from those who wouldn't.

Sweetwater police Detective Juan Llera was at his office a few blocks away, when he heard what he thought was a bomb exploding.

It was not a bomb; it was a bridge, a structure every American has passed under hundreds of times. But in an instant, this 950-ton span under construction at the Florida International University collapsed, and with no time to act or to flee, the cars that just so happened to be below it were pancaked under the rubble. Six people died.

"Imagine," said Amauri Naranjo, who has known Gonzalez since before he left Cuba in the 1980s, "a longtime friendship that survives even with the sea between us, and it ends because of something like that."

Gonzalez and Arias, who together owned a party rental and decoration business, were among the dead. Their bodies were found Saturday inside their white Chevy truck as rescuers for days painstakingly dug through the debris of the fallen pedestrian bridge at Florida International University. Hope for a miracle rescue faded as the names of the six dead became known, and those left living grappled with the senselessness, the suddenness of it.

Many others had been saved by mere seconds.

Dania Garlobo was driving to work at a nail salon when the green light changed to yellow and a man in a white Mercedes tried to make it through the light, but stomped on the brakes just as the bridge fell in front of him.

"He was almost caught underneath. I couldn't believe it," Garlobo said. She watched the bridge smash into the street below in what seemed like an instant.

"How is it that a strong bridge falls down like a piece of board?"

Llera had sped to the scene, arriving within minutes. In the mayhem, he found a man lying unconscious on the street and started performing CPR. He could barely feel a pulse, but someone with the medical staff from the university came by and said, "you are keeping him alive. Keep going." And so he did, and the man was alive when they rushed him away.

Llera checked in at the hospital but could get no information. He thought the man had lived. He'd hoped they could shake hands one day.

But on Sunday morning, he studied a picture on the news of a young man in a crisp red shirt.

He has been identified by police as Navarro Brown, a 37-year-old employee with Structural Technologies VSL, listed among those killed. He had died at the hospital.

"I feel like the bad guy won this time," the officer said as he processed the news Sunday afternoon.

The families of the dead and the injured asked for privacy as they try to make sense of their sudden, inexplicable loss.

"It's a pretty magical thing to find your soul mate in this world," Brandon Brownfield's wife, Chelsea, wrote on Facebook on Sunday. "Like pieces to a jigsaw puzzle, our crazy curvy edges matched and we fit together like no one else could."

The Brownfields had three young daughters, and the family moved to Florida several years ago for his job at Maxim Crane Works, according to a fundraising page a friend started for the family that had raised more than $50,000 in a few days. He was driving home from work when the bridge collapsed.

ACROSS THE NATION

Police: Suspect accused of fatally stabbing 2 men was drunk

ROCHESTER, Minn. (AP)—Two men were fatally stabbed at a Salvation Army apartment building in Minnesota, and police arrested a suspect who tried to leave through a rear stairway. The stabbings were reported around 7:15 p.m. Saturday at Castleview Apartments in Rochester, a 32-unit building that provides shelter for the homeless, disabled, those in poverty or who have mental health issues. Rochester police Capt. John Sherwin told the Post Bulletin newspaper the suspect was "definitely under the influence of alcohol" when he allegedly stabbed the two men on the fourth floor of the building. The 53-year-old man was arrested shortly after the stabbings as he tried to leave the building through a rear stairway and was being held Sunday on two tentative counts of second-degree murder. Police said the men who were stabbed and the suspect all lived at the apartments. Authorities still were trying to piece together the circumstances that led to the stabbings, but Sherwin said the suspect reportedly had "bickered" with the victims "quite a bit." The suspect was combative with arresting officers and would not tell investigators what happened after he was arrested, Sherwin said. The victims were identified as 57-year-old Phillip William Hicks and 45-year-old Eric Alan Flemming. Both men were stabbed in the chest and upper abdomen, Sherwin said. Police said in a news release that officers found the two men "suffering from critical stab wounds." They were later pronounced dead at a hospital.

Teen girl home, man in custody after both located in Mexico

ALLENTOWN, Pa. (AP)—A Pennsylvania teenager who was missing for almost two weeks along with the 45-year-old man who frequently signed her out of school without her parents' permission was returned home and the man was in custody after the two were found in Mexico, authorities said. Federal agents and Mexican authorities found 16-year-old Amy Yu and Kevin Esterly in Playa del Carmen on Saturday and they were flown to Miami, authorities said. Police said the girl, who was in good health, arrived on Sunday in Philadelphia and was taken home to Allentown, 60 miles (97 kilometers) northwest of the city. Esterly was awaiting processing in Miami. The married father of four will face a charge of child custody interference when he arrives in Pennsylvania. The girl's mother, Miu Luu, told The (Allentown) Morning Call that she cried from relief after being told that the pair had been located. "For two weeks, I've had trouble sleeping and eating," Luu told the paper. "I'm very happy."

Winning $457 million Powerball ticket sold in Pennsylvania

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—If you bought a Powerball ticket in Pennsylvania for Saturday's drawing, you may be holding a piece of paper worth $457 million. Powerball officials say a single winning ticket was sold in Pennsylvania that matches all of the winning numbers: 22-57-59-60-66 and Powerball 7. The jackpot from Saturday's drawing is the eighth-largest ever for the Powerball game. The specific location where the winning ticket was sold has not been announced. Powerball is played in 44 states plus Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The largest jackpot in Powerball history was $1.6 billion. Three winning tickets were sold in that Jan. 13, 2016, drawing.

Asia

US, S. Korea, Japan discuss denuclearization, summits

AP
In this March 17, 2018, photo, people pass by a TV screen showing North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, right, and U.S. President Donald Trump during a news program at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea.

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Top U.S., South Korean and Japanese officials discussed how to achieve the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula during weekend talks ahead of upcoming inter-Korean and U.S.-North Korean summits, Seoul said Monday.

South Korean officials who visited Pyongyang recently say North Korean leader Kim Jong Un agreed to hold talks with South Korean President Moon Jae-in in late April. Seoul says Kim proposed meeting with President Donald Trump, who agreed to meet him by the end of May.

The developments have raised hopes for a potential breakthrough in the North Korean nuclear crisis. But many experts say animosities would flare again if the summits fail to produce any progress and leave the nuclear issue with few diplomatic options. North Korea has yet to confirm North Korea-U.S. talks.

U.S. National Security Adviser H.R. McMaster met his South Korean and Japanese counterparts, Chung Eui-yong and Shotaro Yachi, in San Francisco for talks over the weekend on denuclearization and the summit talks, South Korea's presidential office said in a statement.

They agreed to maintain close trilateral cooperation in the next several weeks and shared a view that it's important not to repeat past mistakes, the statement said. It didn't elaborate but likely refers to criticism that North Korea previously used disarmament negotiations as a way to ease outside pressure and win aid while all along secretly pressing its weapons development.

Appearing on CBS's "Face the Nation" aired Sunday, South Korean Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha said Kim had "given his word" that he was committed to denuclearization.

"He's given his word. But the significance of his word is - is quite - quite weighty in the sense that this is the first time that the words came directly from the North Korean supreme leader himself, and that has never been done before," she said.

Kim's willingness to negotiate over his nuclear program is a step forward, but many experts remain skeptical about how sincere he is about giving up a nuclear program that his country has built for decades despite toughening international sanctions.

Chung, who headed a high-level delegation to Pyongyang and met Kim during his March 5-6 trip, says North Korea told his delegation it won't need to keep its nuclear weapons if military threats against it are removed and it receives a credible security guarantee. The North has long maintained such a stance, saying it won't abandon its nuclear weapons unless the United States pulls out its troops from South Korea and Japan and stops regular military drills with South Korea that it views as an invasion rehearsal.

A senior North Korean diplomat, meanwhile, flew to Finland on Sunday for talks with former U.S. officials as well as American and South Korean civilian academics. The meeting, set for Tuesday and Wednesday, is a possible opportunity to examine the North's sincerity about its denuclearization pledges. North Korean officials and former U.S. officials and experts have often held such talks, known as "Track-2."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Fire at Philippine hotel-casino out, death toll raised to 5

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Firefighters found two more bodies Monday in a hotel-casino gutted by fire that sent thick, heavy smoke into the sky over the Philippine capital, raising the death toll to five, officials said. One of several people injured in the blaze at the Manila Pavilion Hotel and Casino was fighting for her life in a hospital, Bureau of Fire Protection officials said, adding that all others guests and hotel employees have been accounted for. The bodies of two security camera operators were found after firefighters managed to control the blaze, which raged from Sunday morning to early Monday, the officials said. It remains unclear if the fire started in the casino on the lower floors or in a mezzanine area that was under renovation. President Rodrigo Duterte saw the billowing smoke and made an aerial inspection Sunday as he flew back to Manila from a northern city where he delivered a speech before Philippine Military Academy graduates, his aide said.

Australian wildfires raze dozens of homes, kill livestock

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Wildfires razed dozens of homes in southeast Australia, cut power to thousands more and killed livestock, but most of the weekend blazes had been contained by Monday. There have been no reports of serious injury, officials said. The worst-hit town was Tathra on the south coast of New South Wales state where more than 70 homes and businesses had been severely damaged or destroyed by a fire that started in woods around midday on Sunday, Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said. In neighboring Victoria state, up to 18 homes had been destroyed over the weekend by three fires and 40,000 homes lost power, Emergency Management Commissioner Craig Lapsley said. Sheep and cattle losses had yet to be assessed. Some of Tathra's evacuated residents would be able to return to their homes on Monday, as emergency workers restore power to the devastated area, Fitzsimmons said.

Duterte urges nations to exit international court

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte urged other governments on Sunday to abandon the International Criminal Court, saying the world tribunal—where he's facing a possible complaint for the thousands of killings of drug suspects under his crackdown—is "rude."

Although the Philippine Senate has ratified the Rome Statute that established the ICC, Duterte said in a speech that the treaty was never enforced in the country because it was not published in the government journal as required by law.

As a result, Duterte said the international court can never have jurisdiction over him, "not in a million years."

Last month, an ICC prosecutor, Fatou Bensouda, announced that she was opening a preliminary examination into a complaint by a Filipino lawyer of suspected extrajudicial killings under Duterte's anti-drug campaign, which could amount to crimes against humanity.

The move angered Duterte, who announced Wednesday that he was withdrawing the Philippine ratification of the Rome Statute "effective immediately," citing "a concerted effort" by Bensouda and U.N. human rights officials "to paint me as a ruthless and heartless violator of human rights."

"You know, if it's not published, there is no law," Duterte said Sunday in a speech before the annual graduation of cadets at the Philippine Military Academy in northern Baguio city.

There was no reason to withdraw from "something which is not existing," Duterte said, adding that he announced the withdrawal from the ICC treaty to draw the world's attention to the issue he had with the international court.

"I will convince everybody now who are under the treaty at ICC: 'Get out, get out, it's rude,'" the brash-talking president said.

Duterte's action came under fire from human rights groups, who said the president was trying to evade accountability by backing out of the ICC. Critics say Duterte can't withdraw from the court by himself and may need the approval of the Senate, which ratified the Rome Statute in 2011.

Commission on Human Rights chief Chito Gascon said that the Philippines has historically been at the forefront of the fight for international justice, but that Duterte's decision "constitutes a reversal that will be viewed as encouraging impunity to continue."

More than 120 countries have ratified the treaty that established the court in 2002 in The Hague. The court can intervene only when a state is unable or unwilling to carry out an investigation and prosecute perpetrators of heinous crimes like crimes against humanity, genocide, aggression and war atrocities.

More than 4,000 mostly poor drug suspects have been killed under Duterte's drug crackdown, according to the national police, although human rights groups have reported larger death tolls. Duterte argued Wednesday that the killings do not amount to crimes against humanity, genocide or similar atrocities.

World

Putin claims crushing victory in Russian presidential vote

AP
Russian President Vladimir Putin speaks to supporters during a rally near the Kremlin in Moscow, Sunday, March 18, 2018.

MOSCOW (AP)—Vladimir Putin rolled to a crushing re-election victory Sunday for six more years as Russia's president, and he told cheering supporters in a triumphant but brief speech that "we are bound for success."

There had been no doubt that Putin would win in his fourth electoral contest; he faced seven minor candidates and his most prominent foe was blocked from the ballot.

His only real challenge was to run up the tally so high that he could claim an indisputable mandate.

With ballots from 80 percent of Russia's precincts counted by early Monday, Putin had amassed 76 percent of the vote. Observers and individual voters reported widespread violations including ballot-box stuffing and forced voting, but the claims are unlikely to dilute the power of Russia's longest-serving leader since Josef Stalin.

As the embodiment of Russia's resurgent power on the world stage, Putin commands immense loyalty among Russians. More than 30,000 crowded into Manezh Square adjacent to the Kremlin in temperatures of minus 10 (15 Fahrenheit) for a victory concert and to await his words.

Putin extolled them for their support - "I am a member of your team"—and he promised them that "we are bound for success."

Then he left the stage after speaking for less than two minutes, a seemingly perfunctory appearance that encapsulated the election's predictability.

Since he took the helm in Russia on New Year's Eve 1999 after Boris Yeltsin's surprise resignation, Putin's electoral power has centered on stability, a quality cherished by Russians after the chaotic breakup of the Soviet Union and the "wild capitalism" of the Yeltsin years.

But that stability has been bolstered by a suppression of dissent, the withering of independent media and the top-down control of politics called "managed democracy."

There were widespread reports of forced voting Sunday, efforts to make Russia appear to be a robust democracy.

Among them were two election observers in Gorny Shchit, a rural district of Yekaterinburg, who told The Associated Press they saw an unusually high influx of people going to the polls between noon and 2 p.m. A doctor at a hospital in the Ural mountains city told the AP that 2 p.m. was the deadline for health officials to report to their superiors that they had voted.

"People were coming in all at once, (they) were entering in groups as if a tram has arrived at a stop," said one of the observers, Sergei Krivonogov. The voters were taking pictures of the pocket calendars or leaflets that poll workers distributed, seemingly as proof of voting, he said.

Other examples from observers and social media included ballot boxes being stuffed with extra ballots in multiple regions; an election official assaulting an observer; CCTV cameras obscured by flags or nets from watching ballot boxes; discrepancies in ballot numbers; last-minute voter registration changes likely designed to boost turnout; and a huge pro-Putin sign in one polling station.

Election officials moved quickly to respond to some of the violations. They suspended the chief of a polling station near Moscow where a ballot-stuffing incident was reported and sealed the ballot box. A man accused of tossing multiple ballots into a box in the far eastern town of Artyom was arrested.

In Africa, Trump's firing of Tillerson a new sign of neglect

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)—Ask some Africans what they think of President Donald Trump and they just shake their heads. That sense of indifference appears to have deepened after Trump fired his secretary of state at the end of Rex Tillerson's first Africa tour last week.

Tillerson's visit was widely seen as a Trump peace offering after the uproar over his reported vulgar remarks about African nations and his administration's neglect of the world's second most populous continent. The former secretary of state had been seen as a restraining influence on Trump and had clashed with the president over several foreign policy matters.

Now many Africans are tamping down their expectations of Trump even more. The U.S. president has rarely spoken about any priorities for a continent where many of its 50-plus nations have long relied on U.S. support for everything from health care to security.

Tillerson's trip to Africa, including to the headquarters of the continent-wide African Union, had been widely seen as an effort to repair damage to relations. Now, with his firing, some in Africa feel they are starting anew with the Trump administration.

Tillerson's departure is a sharp indication of Trump's less-than-positive attitude toward the continent, some say.

"That, in my opinion, is adding insult to injury," said Ted Alemayhu, an Ethiopian-born American who is running for Congress to represent California's 39th District.

While in Africa, Tillerson tried to project a more positive image of the continent, saying its rapid economic growth and fast-growing populations mean its future is increasingly linked to America's.

He visited some of Africa's most prominent economies in Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia and highlighted U.S. security issues with stops in Chad and Djibouti, the site of the only permanent U.S. military base on the continent.

Tillerson also sought to reassure African nations that aid would continue even as the Trump administration pursues deep cuts in foreign assistance, announcing at the end of his visit $533 million in humanitarian aid for countries such as South Sudan and Nigeria.

Nigeria's foreign affairs minister, Geoffrey Onyeama, told The Associated Press that "we don't see any change happening" in relations with the U.S. after Tillerson's firing.

Unlike Trump, recent U.S. leaders engaged substantially with Africa.

Bill Clinton created a signature trade program known as the African Growth and Opportunity Act, and George W. Bush launched an HIV treatment program, PEPFAR, that has boosted the quality of life for hundreds of thousands of AIDS patients across Africa.

Barack Obama enjoyed goodwill throughout the continent, even though some in Africa felt he fell short of expectations as the son of Kenyan man.

Trump has not indicated any possible initiatives for Africa.

Trump "has no need, as he has discovered," to engage with the continent, said Timothy Kalyegira, a prominent social critic in Uganda. "The feeling is that he is a free agent. If he wants to visit Africa, it's fine. If he doesn't want, it doesn't matter."

6 months after Mexico quake some still camp outside homes

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Under a patchwork shelter of overlapping tarps and repurposed vinyl advertisements, several dozen residents of 18 Independence Street pack cheek by jowl into donated tents in the street near their building, which was damaged in the Sept. 19 earthquake.

Six months after the temblor, improvised camps like this one erected by displaced residents are among the most visible signs that not everyone has moved on from the earthquake that killed 228 people in Mexico City and 141 more elsewhere.

Mexico City Reconstruction Commissioner Edgar Oswaldo Tungui Rodriguez said there are 27 such camps around the capital, but denied that people were living in any of them. Rather, he said, quake victims had just posted guards to watch over their property.

Camps visited by Associated Press journalists offered a different reality.

Maria Patricia Rodriguez Gonzalez has been living under tarps on the sidewalk near the Independence Street building with her 13-year-old son and 27-year old daughter for the past six months.

The residents are still allowed to enter the building, but nobody risks staying there.

The bedroom floor in Rodriguez's apartment has sunk since the earthquake. The ceiling sags and plaster has fallen from the walls. Afraid to use the bathroom there, she heats water on a gas burner under the tarps and manages a sort of bath inside a portable toilet on the sidewalk.

At first, Rodriguez and other residents say, there was a lot of solidarity in the neighborhood. Some neighbors let them use their bathrooms and shared food after the magnitude 7.1 quake. But as the days turned to weeks and then to months, sentiments shifted.

People have stolen the gas tanks they use to heat food. Cars have come close to driving through the camp. Some neighbors have stopped speaking to them, others hurl insults.

"It makes us sad that people insult us without knowing the reality we are living," Rodriguez said. "We're not here because we want to be. We're here out of necessity."

Displaced residents received 3,000 pesos ($160) each month for the first three months from the government. The idea was that they would rent apartments elsewhere. But residents say that was not enough to rent apartments in their neighborhood and they fear that without their presence, looters will clear out their possessions. Many residents had lived in the building's 37 units for more than 30 years.

Rodriguez tries to make ends meet by selling candy on a table at the entrance to her camp. She had sold candy out of her ground floor apartment before the earthquake. Others go off to jobs during the day while a few of the building's older women look after the others' young children.

Most everyone has a cough and especially the children are often battling colds, said resident Emma Alvarez Lopez, who helps look after children. Her own granddaughter eventually had to leave the camp after contracting pneumonia.

"If we go, we'll practically be abandoning the building," Alvarez said. "We have to somehow pressure the government to support us."

Focus

AP

This March 15, 2018 photo shows apartment buildings in the Astoria section of Queens, N.Y. The Kushner Cos. routinely filed false paperwork with the city declaring it had zero rent-regulated tenants in dozens of buildings it owned across the city, including these, when it, in fact, had many of them.

AP EXCLUSIVE:

Kushner Cos. filed false NYC housing paperwork

By BERNARD CONDON
AP BUSINESS WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—When the Kushner Cos. bought three apartment buildings in a gentrifying neighborhood of Queens in 2015, most of the tenants were protected by special rules that prevent developers from pushing them out, raising rents and turning a tidy profit.

But that's exactly what the company then run by Jared Kushner did, and with remarkable speed. Two years later, it sold all three buildings for $60 million, nearly 50 percent more than it paid.

Now a clue has emerged as to how President Donald Trump's son-in-law's firm was able to move so fast: The Kushner Cos. routinely filed false paperwork with the city declaring it had zero rent-regulated tenants in dozens of buildings it owned across the city when, in fact, it had hundreds.

While none of the documents during a three-year period when Kushner was CEO bore his personal signature, they provide a window into the ethics of the business empire he ran before he went on to become one of the most trusted advisers to the president of the United States.

"It's bare-faced greed," said Aaron Carr, founder of Housing Rights Initiative, a tenants' rights watchdog that compiled the work permit application documents and shared them with The Associated Press. "The fact that the company was falsifying all these applications with the government shows a sordid attempt to avert accountability and get a rapid return on its investment."

Kushner Cos. responded in a statement that it outsources the preparation of such documents to third parties that are reviewed by independent counsel, and "if mistakes or violations are identified, corrective action is taken immediately."

"Kushner would never deny any tenant their due-process rights," it said, adding that the company "has renovated thousands of apartments and developments with minimal complaints over the past 30 years."

For the three Queens buildings in the borough's Astoria neighborhood, the Kushner Cos. checked a box on construction permit applications in 2015 that indicated the buildings had zero rent-regulated tenants. Tax records filed a few months later showed the company inherited as many as 94 rent-regulated units from the previous owner.

In all, Housing Rights Initiative found the Kushner Cos. filed at least 80 false applications for construction permits in 34 buildings across New York City from 2013 to 2016, all of them indicating there were no rent-regulated tenants. Instead, tax documents show there were more than 300 rent-regulated units. Nearly all the permit applications were signed by a Kushner employee, including sometimes the chief operating officer.

Had the Kushner Cos. disclosed those rent-regulated tenants, it could have triggered stricter oversight of construction crews by the city, including possibly unscheduled "sweeps" on site by inspectors to keep the company from harassing tenants and getting them to leave.

Instead, current and former tenants of the Queens buildings told the AP that they were subjected to extensive construction, with banging, drilling, dust and leaking water that they believe were part of targeted harassment to get them to leave and clear the way for higher-paying renters.

"It was noisy, there were complaints, I got mice," said mailman Rudolph Romano, adding that he also bristled at a 60 percent rent increase, a hike the Kushner Cos. contends was initiated by the previous landord. "They cleaned the place out. I watched the whole building leave."

Tax records show those rent-regulated units that numbered as many as 94 when Kushner took over fell to 25 by 2016.

In Kushner buildings across the city, records show frequent complaints about construction going on early in the morning or late at night against the rules, improper or illegal construction, and work without a permit.

AP

This March 15, 2018 photo shows apartment buildings in the Astoria section of Queens, N.Y. The Kushner Cos. routinely filed false paperwork with the city declaring it had zero rent-regulated tenants in dozens of buildings it owned across the city, including these, when it, in fact, had many of them.

At a six-story walk-up in Manhattan's East Village that was once home to the Beat poet Allen Ginsberg, the Kushner Cos. filed an application to begin construction in late 2013 that, again, listed zero rent-regulated tenants. Tax records a few months later showed seven rent-regulated units.

"All of a sudden, there was drilling, drilling. ... You heard the drilling in the middle of night," said one of the rent-regulated tenants, Mary Ann Siwek, 67, who lives on Social Security payments and odd jobs. "There were rats coming in from the abandoned building next door. The hallways were always filled with lumber and sawdust and plaster."

A knock on the door came a few weeks later, and an offer of at least $10,000 if she agreed to leave the building.

"I know it's pretty horrible, but we can help you get out," Siwek recalls the man saying. "We can offer you money."

Siwek turned down the cash and sued instead. She said she won a year's worth of free rent and a new refrigerator.

New York City Council member Ritchie Torres, who plans to launch an investigation into permit applications, said: "The Kushners appear to be engaging in what I call the weaponization of construction."

Rent stabilization is a fixture of New York City that can bedevil developers seeking to make money off buildings. To free themselves of its restrictions, landlords usually have to wait until the rent rises above $2,733 a month, something that can take years given the small increases allowed each year.

Submitting false documents to the city's Department of Buildings for construction permits is a misdemeanor, which can carry fines of up to $25,000. But real estate experts say it is often flouted with little to no consequences. Landlords who do so get off with no more than a demand from the city, sometimes a year or more later, to file an "amended" form with the correct numbers.

Housing Rights Initiative found the Kushner Cos. filed dozens of amended forms for the buildings mentioned in the documents, most of them a year to two later.

"There is a lack of tools to go after landlords who harass tenants, and there is a lack of enforcement," said Seth Miller, a real estate lawyer who used to work at a state housing agency overseeing rent regulations. Until officials inspect every construction site, "you're going to have this incentive for landlords to make life uncomfortable for tenants."

New York City's Department of Buildings did not comment in general about the false filings by the Kushner Cos., but said it disciplined a contractor who filed false documents while working on two of the Queens buildings, which are currently under investigation by a tenant-harassment task force. It added that the department is also ramping up its monitoring of construction, hiring 72 new inspectors under city laws recently passed to crack down on tenant harassment.

"We won't tolerate landlords who use construction to harass tenants—no matter who they are," spokesman Joseph Soldevere said.

Exactly how much money the Kushner Cos. earned from the buildings mentioned in the documents is unclear. Of those 34 buildings, only the three in Queens and a fourth in Brooklyn appear to have been sold. The company also likely made money by reducing the number of rent-regulated tenants and bringing in those who would pay more.

Jared Kushner, who stepped down as CEO of the Kushner Cos. last year before taking on his advisory role at the White House, sold off part of his real estate holdings as required under government ethics rules. But he retained stakes in many properties, including Westminster Management, the Kushner Cos. subsidiary that oversees its residential properties. A financial disclosure last year showed he still owns a stake in Westminster and earned $1.6 million from the holding.

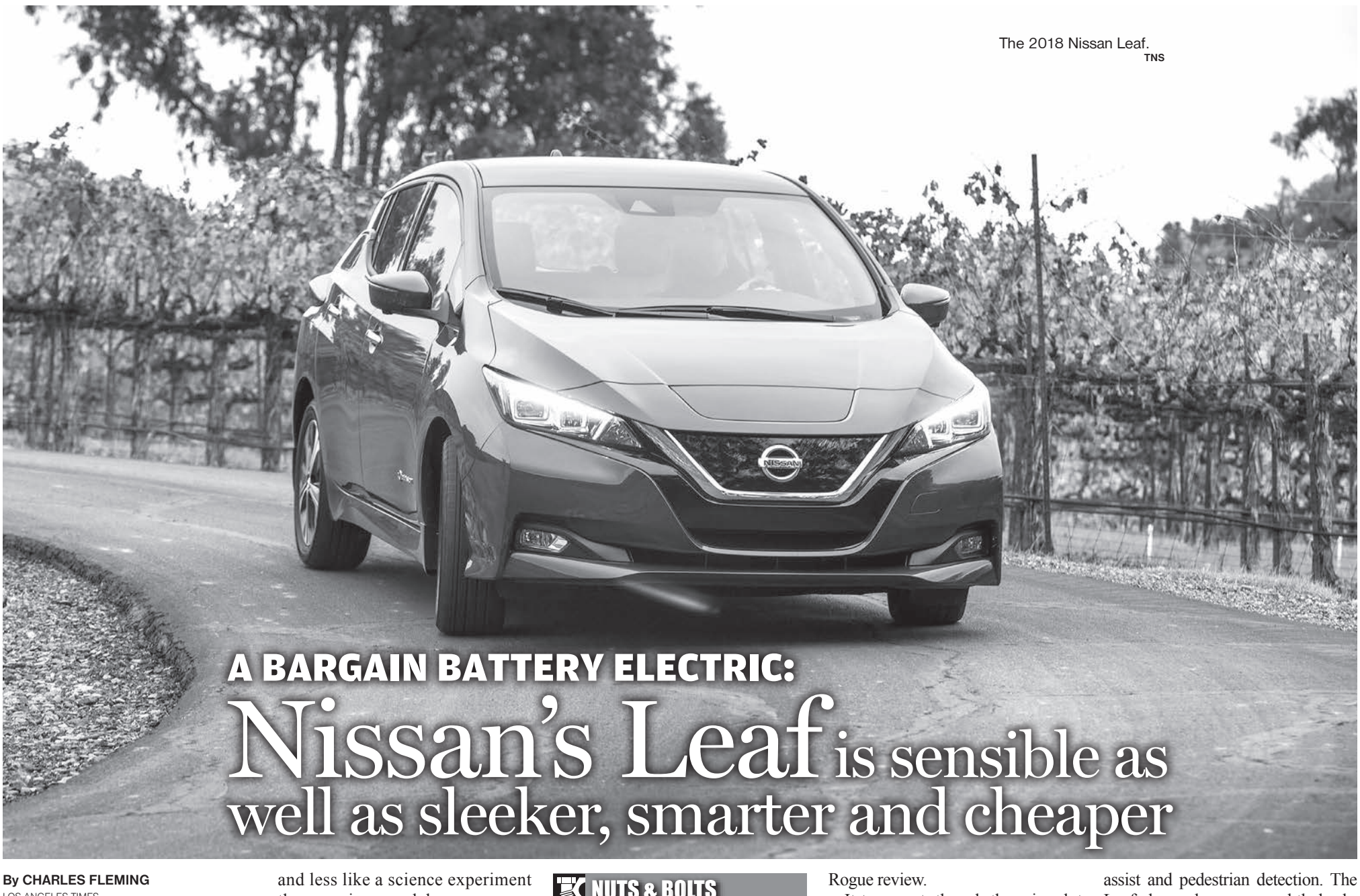
Back in Queens, the mailman Romano was one of the few rent-regulated tenants who fought back.

He hired a lawyer who found out he was protected from the 60-percent rent hike by law, something Romano did not know at the time. And he said his rent, which was set to increase to $3,750, was restored to $2,350.

Romano is still in the building where he has lived for nine years, with his wife, four children and his guests from the construction days—the mice.

"I still haven't gotten rid of them."

Overdrive



The 2018 Nissan Leaf.
TNS

A BARGAIN BATTERY ELECTRIC:

Nissan's Leaf is sensible as well as sleeker, smarter and cheaper

By CHARLES FLEMING
LOS ANGELES TIMES

Battery electric car sales are low and growing more slowly than the Sierra snowpack.

Even in green California, and despite a 30 percent increase over 2016, sales of battery electric vehicles accounted for only 2.5 percent of all sales in the state last year, according to the California New Car Dealers Assn.

The Nissan Leaf was the earliest practical BEV on the road, and was a landmark vehicle when it debuted on American highways in late 2010.

More than 300,000 of the little electric cars have been sold since, about half of them in the U.S., making the Leaf, by Nissan's reckoning, the top-selling global BEV of all time.

But the Leaf has gained company and lost market share since 2010. Nissan said it sold 11,230 of them last year. According to the California dealers group, fewer Leafs were sold in the state in 2017 than the Chevy Bolt EV, Tesla Model S and Model X, and Fiat 500e.

Before you start cracking wise about Nissan needing to turn over a new Leaf, the 2018 actually is a new Leaf.

The new model goes farther on a charge, recharges faster, has more features, is better looking and costs less than the 2017.

The Leaf profile is lower, longer and sleeker. With sportier edges, it looks more like a car and less like a science experiment than previous models.

Range has risen to an EPA-approved 151 miles, up from 107 miles, powered by a 40-kWh lithium-ion battery, replacing the 30-kWh battery on earlier models.

That and some software changes have made the Leaf livelier. Horsepower and torque numbers are up substantially on the 2018 model, which jets silently from corner to corner and up to freeway speed.

The range and battery life can also be extended using a variety of driving modes, giving the driver more control over how the Leaf's battery power is spent.

A 6.6-kW onboard charger makes it possible to juice the Leaf up more quickly than previous models. Nissan says the Leaf can be charged at the rate of 22 miles of range per hour on a Level 2 charger, or as fast as 90 miles in a half-hour at a fast-charging station.

Among the standard new features is Nissan's e-Pedal, a technology that allows the car to apply electronic "braking" when the driver reduces pressure on the accelerator. This slows the car, and will bring it to a complete stop, while returning energy to the battery.

With practice, the actual brakes seldom need to be applied at all — which increases range and extends the life of the brakes.

Nissan is proud of its ProPilot driving assistance feature, which is now available in the Leaf. The program is designed to function as an adaptive cruise control system, applying braking and accelerating as needed, and helping the driver steer straight too.

The feature is not an autonomous driving system but is a "hands-on" driver assistance tool, Nissan says, designed to reduce fatigue and stress by liberating the driver from constant use of the brake and accelerator pedals.

ProPilot was first introduced in Nissan's Rogue — which aside from the Leaf is the only Nissan vehicle to feature the system — and I had a chance to try it in that vehicle. I wasn't all that impressed, and looked forward to trying it again, thinking I might have been too critical in my Rogue review.

It turns out, though there is a lot to like in the new Leaf, I still wasn't crazy about the ProPilot, which I found clumsy and lacking in finesse compared with similar systems on vehicles—admittedly more expensive ones—made by Mercedes, Tesla, Cadillac and others.

Nissan has given its Leaf a clean new dashboard look and has used fabric and plastics to produce effective sound deadening. Around town and on the freeway, the Leaf is a nice, quiet car.

The driver's cockpit is comfortable and spacious, though the back seats will be a little cramped for full-size adults. Those back-seat folks are given cup holders but no plug-in ports for their devices.

The storage area behind the front seats is adequate, and gets bigger when the rear seats are folded forward. But as on a lot of BEVs, there's a battery back there, which will make loading a bicycle or large box a little difficult.

The entry-level Leaf starts at $30,875. The car comes in S, SV and SL trim lines.

The model I drove was an SV, which differed from the entry-level S by having a navigation system and Apple CarPlay.

It was also equipped with an All-Weather Package, a $900 upgrade that included heated front seats and steering wheel, and a $2,200 Technology Package that provided ProPilot and other safety features such as blind spot warning, rear cross-traffic assist and pedestrian detection. The Leaf also makes a very subtle backup noise, like a quiet version of the backup beep on a commercial delivery truck. Pedestrians who complain about the stealthy silence of BEVs will benefit from this gentle warning.

Will all of that be enough to reverse the Leaf's sales slide, or get more people revved for BEV driving?

It should. Irrespective of how people feel about saving the environment with a zero-emission vehicle — personally, I'm for it — or how much people argue about the electricity that drives BEVs — yes, some of it might come from a coal-fired plant — the Leaf is a car bargain.

And even more so now. On the SV, the MSRP is about $1,700 lower than on the 2017 — $33,375 versus $35,085.

Many state and federal jurisdictions offer rebates and tax incentives to BEV buyers. As a further inducement, EPA tests determined that the average Leaf driver will spend only $600 a year on fuel, and will save $3,750 in fuel costs over five years of driving — and that's if gasoline prices remain stable.

That, paired with the reasonably low MSRP on the Leaf, should help a few people become a little more willing to think about giving up their petrol habit and going electric.

Charles Fleming writes about automobiles and motorcycles for the Los Angeles Times' Business section. Readers may send him email at charles.fleming@latimes.com.

NUTS & BOLTS

2018 Nissan Leaf SV

- Times' take: All-new BEV Leaf is a cool car bargain
- Highs: Quiet, efficient, one-pedal driving experience
- Lows: ProPilot system needs improvement
- Vehicle type: Four-door, five-passenger hatchback
- Base price: $33,375
- Price as tested: $36,605
- Powertrain: 110-kW electric motor
- Transmission: Direct, front-wheel drive
- Horsepower: 147
- Torque: 236 pound-feet
- Battery size: 40 kWh
- EPA-approved range: 151 miles
- EPA fuel economy rating: 125 miles per gallon city equivalent / 100 highway / 112 combined

In Celebration of His New Life

JOAQUIN SABLAN TORRES

Lovingly Known as "Jack"

Born to life on May 26, 1947, called to his eternal home on March 11, 2018

In his new life, he now joins:

Parents: †William S. Torres & †Rosa S. Torres
Siblings: †Elizabeth S. Torres-Untalan & Angel Brother †Joaquin S. Torres
Nephew: †William Gerard Torres

His memories will forever live in the hearts of his:

Loving & caring wife Dianne Verdejo-Torres (DJ, Nico, Andrei, & Lane), **and children Joseph Oldham Torres** (Jeric, Jack, Jessalyn, Aulani, & James), **Neil Howard Torres** (Kayani Kinai), and **Suzanne Marie Torres-Pangilinan** & Edward Pangilinan (Sania & Edward)

Siblings & In-Laws:

Juan S. Torres & Janet F. Torres, Children, & Grandchildren
Maria T. Persson & Jon G. Persson, Children, & Grandchildren
†**Elizabeth S. Torres-Untalan** & Pedro T. Untalan, Children, & Grandchildren
Ramon S. Torres & Lillian Wong
William S. Torres & Priscilla M. Torres, & Children

In his new life, Jack is remembered by numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, nephews, and friends on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota, Guam and abroad.

Eucharistic celebration is offered daily at Kristo Rai Parish Church at 6:00 a.m. from March 13 to 20, 2018.

Responso and Rosary will begin at 8:00 AM on Wednesday, March 21, 2018 at the Kristo Rai Parish. Mass of Christian Burial will immediately follow at 10:00 AM.

Thank You and Si Yu'us Ma'ase

Wife Dianne, Children, Grandchildren and Family

Life & Style

Sean Bean on his many deaths and 'Game of Thrones' legacy

By MARK KENNEDY
AP ENTERTAINMENT WRITER

This image released by Crackle shows Sean Bean, left, and Ryan Kwanten in a scene from the Crackle original series, "The Oath." AP

NEW YORK (AP)—Sean Bean is as famous for his rugged looks and thick northern British accent as the many creative ways in which he dies onscreen.

He's been stabbed, shot, chased off a cliff, tossed off a satellite dish, beheaded, exploded, killed by arrows, and drawn and quartered in everything from the Bond movie "Goldeneye" to "Game of Thrones" and "The Lord of the Rings."

For his new series, the Yorkshire-bred actor shockingly makes it to the end of the season. In "The Oath," on Crackle, Bean plays the imprisoned patriarch of a gang of rogue cops. It's a brooding, dark and violent look at how corrosive corruption can be.

Bean, 58, talked with The Associated Press about the new series, his many deaths and why he's pleased that he's left his mark on "Game of Thrones" long after losing his head.

AP: This is another tightly wound, sinister character. What attracts you to them?

Bean: I guess when your character is in darkness or is very cerebral and contained, you don't have to learn as many lines. (Laughs.) You just do it with facial expression. They do actually tend to be men-of-not-many words sort of characters—I quite like that. I don't like saying too much. I don't like too much repetition.

AP: The series is shot in Puerto Rico and had to contend with Hurricane Maria in September. The cast and crew returned to finish filming after that monster storm. Was it hard?

Bean: I was there for the first few weeks. I'd finished my scenes by, I suppose, July, something like that. I'd been gone about three weeks when I started picking it up on the news report. It was pretty bad, you know. I know it gets storms in that part of the world but I never thought it would be as bad as that. I thought about the people there who welcomed us with open arms. They're very friendly and hardworking people and it was just a shock to think that they were there and the power was out.

AP: Is there a second season in the works and are you a part of it?

Bean: Well, I don't die in it. Well, maybe I shouldn't tell you. You know, everyone expects me to die, don't they? I think there's talk of it. I think they're seeing how it goes down and see what the reaction is.

AP: Can we talk about your many deaths? Does it affect your choices?

Bean: I don't mind. I remember Sean Connery once said that he doesn't like dying in films. He doesn't take jobs on where he dies in films. He doesn't think it's a good vibe or good karma. So I don't know where that leaves me. I can understand that but I've done it so many times. It's not intentional but I know I'm high up in the death table. But they've all been quite memorable. It's a surprise when I survive. A quite nice surprise for me and, hopefully, for the audience as you always think I'm going to die.

AP: Actually, we're a little shocked you managed to survive through the first season of "The Oath."

Bean: There was talk about me dying in it but they liked what they saw, what I was doing, and I think they decided to extend his life a bit more.

AP: Can we talk about your accent? It seems like many directors leave you alone.

Bean: Unless there's a reason to change it, I usually use how I speak now. Not too broad. If I spoke really broad Yorkshire, people might not understand what I'm saying. I kind of tone it down. It suits the characters that I play, many of them anyway. Certainly it suited Ned Stark. We did the read-through and the producers and directors and writers said, 'Just talk like that, Sean. What do you think?' I said, 'Yeah, all right. Good with me.' But then everybody who came after was part of the Stark family who had to adopt a Yorkshire accent.

AP: Speaking of "Game of Thrones," we know Stark had a swift and grisly end. But have you noticed that your story line is still the dominant one? Does that please you?

Bean: I'm glad they remember me and am mentioned because it leaves a legacy. It's wonderful to be still mentioned because the character made such a big impact in the first season. He was one of a very few good men. They're all such backstabbers, poisonous people. He kind of stood out as a man with principles and morals and a good heart. A strong, confident man. That's probably one of the reasons he didn't survive. He wasn't devilish enough.

Bark Bracket: Retrievers become top dogs, boosted by UMBC

By BEN WALKER
AP SPORTS WRITER

They're now at the top of the Bark Bracket.

Very good dog, you Retrievers!

In a sport full of Bulldogs, Huskies and Terriers, a new breed is suddenly ruling the NCAA basketball tournament—and beyond.

All thanks to those underdogs at UMBC.

"How 'bout those Retrievers?" dog expert David Frei raved. "This is their moment."

'Bout time, too.

Always in the doghouse at America's most prestigious pooch pageant, no retriever has ever won best in show at the Westminster Kennel Club, a competition that began in 1877.

Not a single Chesapeake Bay retriever, the state dog of Maryland and the mascot for the 16th-seeded University of Maryland-Baltimore County team that toppled mighty Virginia on Friday night.

Not a friendly Labrador retriever, the most popular dog in the United States for more than 25 years, according to the American Kennel Club. Nor a sweet golden, another favorite family pet.

And zero wins for the flat-coated, curly-coated or Nova Scotia duck tolling varieties.

"No, it's not fair," JoAnn Colvin lamented.

Colvin, an owner and breeder of fine Chesapeake Bay retrievers for over three decades, lives in upstate New York and has attended Syracuse basketball games.

Colvin also owns the dog that was judged last month as the best Chessie at Westminster and showed at Madison Square Garden.

Her name? Fittingly, in the glow of UMBC's win, it's Hope.

"We, of course, were certainly pleased to hear about what happened," Colvin said.

And Retriever Fever was catching, with hoop fans and dog fanciers alike posting pictures of lovable retrievers on social media as UMBC prepared to play Kansas State on Sunday night.

Known for their webbed feet, and an oily, wavy coat that helps make them extremely agile in the water, Chesapeake Bays "are probably the most intense of the retrievers," Frei said.

"You can tell a golden. You can order a Labrador. But you have to negotiate with a Chessie," he said.

The breed is considered strong, well-balanced and intelligent, and eager to work. Their colors range from a combination of dark brown to a strawberry blonde to yellow—"sedge" and "deadgrass" are the official shades.

Overall, Chesapeake Bay retrievers have recently ranked among the 45 most popular purebred breeds in the country.

Authorities investigating claims teacher fed puppy to turtle

PRESTON, Idaho (AP) — Authorities are investigating reports a teacher fed a sick puppy to a snapping turtle in a rural Idaho town that was the setting for the teenage cult classic film "Napoleon Dynamite."

The uproar has forced police to step up security amid threats at Preston Junior High School and other schools in the district following the incident that reportedly occurred on March 7 in front of several students after school.

Investigators are looking into possible animal cruelty charges. The teacher has not been named by authorities.

Preston Police Chief Mike Peterson said Friday the threats were vague but linked to the allegation that the reportedly ailing puppy was fed to the turtle March 7.

"It was enough of a threat that our parents thought we ought to have a bit of a presence over there," Peterson said.

He said two police officers and four Franklin County sheriff's deputies were stationed at schools on Thursday that are normally patrolled by one sheriff's deputy. The district doesn't hold classes on Fridays, but officers may return to provide added security on Monday.

Peterson said the sheriff's office has submitted its findings of the incident to Franklin County Prosecuting Attorney Vic Pearson. But Pearson said his agency has a conflict of interest and earlier this week forwarded the report to another prosecutor in the region that he didn't name.

He said in a news release that the high volume of calls being received by law enforcement and his office was "hindering our ability to complete what needs to be done to reach the end goal of justice in this case."

Franklin County Sheriff David Fryar didn't immediately return a call from The Associated Press on Friday.

The Preston School District's answering system said its mailbox was full and not accepting messages. But in a previous statement, Superintendent Marc Gee said the district became aware of "a regrettable circumstance involving some of the biological specimens."

The Idaho Humane Society has called for an investigation and has contacted local officials offering its help.

In a statement, it said it shares the concern "of all our constituents who are deeply disturbed by the news from Preston, Idaho, regarding allegations of the mistreatment of a puppy in a classroom setting."

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals in a statement said the teacher is a "bully who should not be allowed near impressionable young people."

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Maine resident Jesus Christ sends letter to Oprah Winfrey

WATERBORO, Maine (AP)—A letter from Jesus Christ might be the affirmation Oprah Winfrey needs to run for the presidency. WGME-TV reports an 83-year-old Maine woman who changed her name to Jesus Christ says she began a letter writing campaign 50 years ago to spread a message of faith and peace. Christ says she sent the letter to Winfrey because she likes her but had no idea it would get so much attention. Gayle King, one of the hosts of "CBS This Morning," posted about the letter to Winfrey on Instagram on Wednesday, asking if it was the sign her best friend was looking for. Winfrey said on "60 Minutes" that if God wanted her to run for president "wouldn't God kinda tell me?" Christ says she didn't know there was speculation about Winfrey, but she'd vote for her.

Aretha Franklin cancels concerts due to doctor's orders

NEW YORK (AP)—Aretha Franklin is canceling two upcoming concerts on doctor's orders. The Queen of Soul's management team says in a statement Friday that Franklin will not perform March 25 at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center in Newark, New Jersey. That show would have taken place on her 76th birthday. Franklin also won't appear April 28 at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. Organizers say Rod Stewart will perform as the headliner instead. The statement says the singer has been ordered by her doctor to stay off the road and rest completely for at least the next two months. It adds that Franklin is "extremely disappointed she cannot perform as she had expected and hoped to." Last year, Franklin announced her plans to retire, saying she would perform at "some select things."

With torn ligament, SZA powers through performance

NEW YORK (AP)—R&B singer SZA didn't let a torn ligament in her foot slow her down at a concert for her feverish fans in New York City. She walked into the venue Friday with a crutch helping her to the chair placed in the middle of the stage. She injured her foot while performing last week at the BUKU Music + Art Project festival in New Orleans. Backed by three musicians, she delivered her direct lyrics from songs that helped her become the most nominated woman at this year's Grammy Awards, while her fans sang along. Though injured, she performed in style, wearing fuzzy, platform, pink slippers though her right foot had a brace on it. "I don't really have a plan, but we're gonna, like, wing this," she said after singing her first song, holding onto the microphone stand for support. SZA danced excitedly while the Travis Scott verse played from her hit, "Love Galore," and she used both crutches while singing her popular slow groove and crowd favorite, "The Weekend." Her performance at Samsung 837 was in celebration of the company's new Galaxy S9 phone, released Friday.

St. Louis high school band gets surprise visit from the pope

ST. LOUIS (AP)—A group of 45 band students from a Jesuit high school in St. Louis didn't know they'd get a surprise visit from Pope Francis when they recently performed at the Vatican.

The St. Louis University High School students had been on a musical trip in Italy since March 9 to celebrate the school's bicentennial. The band was excited to perform Wednesday before thousands in St. Peter's Square, when a Swiss Guard motioned them over to the steps of St. Peter's Basilica, the St. Louis Post-Dispatch reported.

"We all had instruments and music stands, but we just picked them up and started running over," said Jeff Pottinger, the band director. "And our tour guide shouted, 'You're going to meet the pope.'"

The band played "O Sacred Head Now Wounded" as the 266th head of the Roman Catholic Church entered the area. Pottinger said he expected Pope Francis to continue on quickly, but instead he stood attentively in front of the band.

"Half the boys aren't even playing at this point, they're just standing there like, 'My God, that's the pope,'" he said.

Pope Francis then met with the students and chaperones, even posing for some selfies. He eventually rode away on the popemobile as the band played its school fight song.

"We are still all freaking out," Pottinger said. "You see a picture of yourself with the pope and it's almost like an out-of-body experience."

The band members, who were set to return to St. Louis on Friday, will have a story they can share for years, Pottinger said.

"I told the students this is something you can tell your family for three generations," he said. "It's unforgettable."

'Black Panther' tops box office for 5th straight weekend

NEW YORK (AP)—Not since "Avatar" has a box-office hit had the kind of staying power of "Black Panther." Ryan Coogler's comic-book sensation on Sunday became the first film since James Cameron's 2009 smash to top the weekend box office five straight weekends.

The Disney release grossed $27 million in ticket sales over the weekend, according to studio estimates, pushing its domestic haul to $605.4 million. Worldwide, "Black Panther" has grossed more than $1.1 billion.

Though "Black Panther" has had little competition to contend with throughout February and March, such consistency is especially rare in today's movie-going world. Before "Avatar," the last film to do it was 1999's "The Sixth Sense."

That left second place to the MGM-Warner Bros.' rebooted "Tomb Raider," starring Alicia Vikander as the archaeologist adventurer Lara Croft. The $90 million film opened with $23.5 million, largely failing to stir much excitement among moviegoers. Critics gave it mediocre reviews (49 percent fresh on Rotten Tomatoes) and ticket-buyers responded with a "meh," giving it a B CinemaScore.

AP
This file image released by Disney and Marvel Studios' shows Chadwick Boseman in a scene from «Black Panther.» "

With Vikander stepping in for Angelina Jolie, Roar Uthaug's "Tomb Raider" is an attempt to rekindle a video game-adapted franchise that faded quickly the first time around. The 2001 original opened $47.7 million and grossed $274.7 million worldwide, but the big-budget 2003 sequel flopped, opening with $21.8 million domestically and grossing $156.5 million worldwide.

Jeff Goldstein, distribution chief for Warner Bros., said "Tomb Raider" came close to studio expectations in North America but that international ticket sales were a primary focus. "Tomb Raider" was no. 1 overseas, grossing $84.5 million, including a $41.1 million in China.

"International was always a key part of the strategy," Goldstein said.

1. **"Black Panther,"** $27 million ($30 million international).
2. **"Tomb Raider,"** $23.5 million ($84.5 million international).
3. **"I Can Only Imagine,"** $17.1 million ($195,000 international).
4. **"A Wrinkle in Time,"** $16.6 million ($3.2 million international).
5. **"Love, Simon,"** $11.5 million.
6. **"Game Night,"** $5.6 million ($3.7 million international).
7. **"Peter Rabbit,"** $5.2 million ($14.5 million international).
8. **"Strangers: Prey at Night,"** $4.8 million.
9. **"Red Sparrow,"** $4.5 million ($8.9 million international).
10. **"Death Wish,"** $3.4 million ($1.3 million international).

Love is lost in good marriage as abuse increases with time

DEAR ABBY: I have been married 14 years and have two children. The first three years of marriage were great. We both cared for and respected each other. As our children grew older and our jobs have become more demanding, my husband has changed about how he views our sex life.

After our third year of marriage, my husband started raping me. No one knows this except an ex-sister-in-law.

At first, I didn't understand what was really happening. He was forceful and wouldn't take no for an answer. I went along with it at first, thinking I wasn't giving him enough attention and was doing the "wifely duty." But over the years it has become worse—ripping my clothing off and holding me down.

I have told him it's not OK, but if I speak up, it leads to a fight. He says I don't show him I care for him and we don't have sex enough, so this is his way of getting it.

Abby, I have lost respect for the man I married. I no longer want to be intimate with him, because he doesn't respect me or my body. The only reason I have stayed this long is for my children. Is there hope in him changing?

SLEEPING ON THE COUCH

DEAR SLEEPING ON THE COUCH: Ripping a spouse's clothing off and holding her (or him) down is not foreplay; it is spousal rape and a form of domestic abuse. It is a crime in all 50 states. The level of hostility in your home isn't healthy for you or your children, who may grow up thinking it is normal.

Because your husband may become violent if you tell him the marriage is over, contact RAINN—(800) 656-4673; rainn.org—and let them help you form a safe escape plan. It is not normal for a man to treat a woman the way your husband has. He is unlikely to change, and you need to look out for yourself and the children.

DEAR ABBY: My wife is in her 30s. She's a beautiful woman and a wonderful mother to our three children, and my soul mate. We've been married 10 years. She has many qualities I love and admire, but also one that causes me serious concern: her slouchy posture. She slouched a little when we married, but her posture has worsened dramatically since then.

We have spent thousands of dollars on personal trainers, massage and chiropractic. When we (infrequently) quarrel, she unconsciously slouches more, which drives me crazy. She's willing to see professional medical practitioners, but is unwilling to accept any responsibility for it. I can't bring it up without her getting bristly and defensive, but it's getting worse every year. It's also taking a toll on our relationship. I'd appreciate any advice you could share.

DESPERATE FOR STRAIGHT TALK

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR DESPERATE: If your wife's posture is the only thing about her that causes you "serious concern," you are a lucky man. Believe me when I tell you I have been told far worse.

Correcting one's posture takes constant vigilance and determination. It's not easy, and not everyone is able to manage it. Slouching is a defensive posture, and if she slouches even more when you raise the subject, it may have something to do with the way you're doing it.

Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

I'M HUNGRY.
WELL, YOU CAN'T CATCH ANYTHING IN MY TERRITORY. THAT'S WHAT THE BOOK SAYS.
WHAT DO TIGERS EAT IN THE WILD ANYWAY?
THEY CATCH BIG GROSS CATERPILLARS LIKE THAT ONE.
EWWW. IT'S GOT LITTLE SPIKES ALL OVER HIM. TIGERS REALLY EAT THESE?
BY THE TRUCK LOAD. THEY'RE GREAT.
LET ME SEE THE BOOK.
WHO ARE YOU GOING TO BELIEVE, SOME SILLY WRITER OR A REAL TIGER?

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

OKAY. WOW. THIS GARAGE IS A MESS.
WHAT'S WITH ALL THESE EMPTY BOXES?
WELL, YOUR DAD CAUGHT A TOUCH OF THE ONLINE SHOPPING BUG THIS WINTER.
A TOUCH?? IT LOOKS LIKE YOU HAD THE AMAZON FLU!
LOOK. IF THERE WAS A SHOT, I'D GET IT.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Kelly of morning TV
5 Last (Abbr.)
8 Witticism
12 War god
13 Greyhound vehicle
14 Desire
15 Clock sound
17 "The heat —!"
18 Curved letter
19 Jamie Foxx biopic
20 Surgery souvenirs
21 Wager
22 Sturdy tree
23 Shopping meccas
26 "Sesame Street" cast
30 Director Kazan
31 Cave mammal
32 Currier's partner
33 Carefree
35 Potpourri output
36 Crucial
37 Stir-fry pan
38 Teenage Mutant — Turtles
41 Sheep's cry
42 Some coll. degrees
45 Cruising
46 Hiker's bag
48 Artist Chagall
49 Biblical boat
50 Choir voices
51 Furry sci-fi critter
52 Sample
53 Fine spray

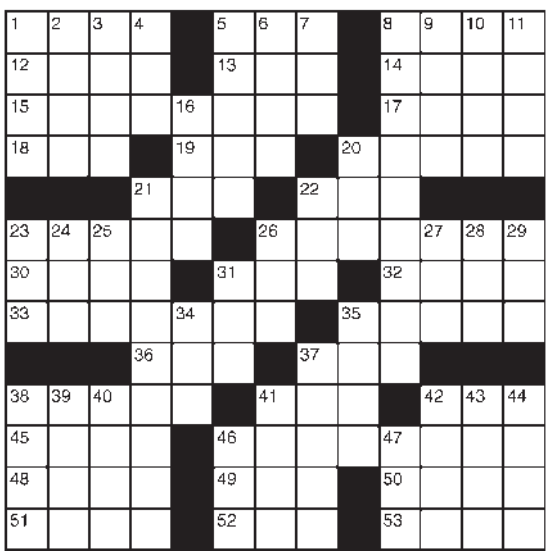
DOWN

1 Assess
2 Rainbow
3 Chest muscles, briefly
4 Request
5 WWII sub
6 Historic sitcom star
7 "For shame!"
8 Lottery ticket type
9 Celestial bear
10 Mr. Stravinsky
11 Corrals
16 "— chic!"
20 Enervate
21 Casino game
22 Ump's call
23 "I'm not impressed"
24 Carte lead-in
25 Dogpatch adjective
26 Guy
27 Prior night
28 Sawbuck
29 Bygone jet
31 Lad
34 Pro vote
35 Drench
37 Madcap
38 Handle
39 Caesar's "vidi"
40 Sleuth Wolfe
41 Duelist Aaron
42 Java neighbor
43 Play parts
44 "SNL" segment
46 Squealer
47 America's uncle

Solution time: 22 mins.

T	O	M			W	A	S		T	W	I	G
A	V	O	W		E	T	C		H	O	O	P
F	E	N	O		B	O	A		L	O	N	S
S	N	O	R	T		P	L	O	W			
			K	I	A		P	R	I	S	S	Y
E	C	L	I	P	S	E		S	L	A	T	E
M	O	O	N		H	R	S		D	R	A	W
L	S	A	G	E		G	A	M	B	I	T	S
S	I	D	L	E	S		Y	O	L			
			U	L	N	A		O	N	C	U	E
Z	I	O	N		U	M	P		C	O	B	S
I	M	A	C		F	I	E		H	E	E	P
G	O	T	H		F	D	R			D	R	Y

Yesterday's answer 3-20



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Ruby Rose, 32; Holly Hunter, 60; Spike Lee, 61; William Hurt, 68.

Happy Birthday: Tune in to what's going on around you. There is money to be made and changes you can be a part of if you are observant and responsive to what you see and hear. Head in a direction that will benefit you as well as help others and you will find a place that is fortuitous as well as gratifying. Your numbers are 3, 10, 16, 23, 32, 35, 47.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Stay focused on what's expected of you. Once you deliver, you will be free to expand into areas of interest that will allow you to display what you have to offer. Stick to your plan. Don't hold back. Do your thing. ✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Share your findings and be willing to not only speak about what you know but show others exactly how you arrived at your findings. Representing something or someone you believe in will encourage a better future. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Don't overlook a document or financial statement that can change the dynamics of what you owe in taxes or other debts you've incurred. Stay on top of what you owe, what you've spent and how your money best serves you. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Discuss your plans and listen to suggestions and advice. A partnership may not be a bad idea if you lay down ground rules before you begin. Allowing everyone to do what he or she does best will lead to success. ✪✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* You have plenty to gain. Gather information and offer kindness and solutions to those facing difficulties. What's offered in return will give you the boost you need to get ahead. Don't be surprised if someone isn't pleased with your success. ✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* A business trip or meeting will give you the push you need to pursue something you've been mulling over for some time. Find out how much of an investment you have to make to get what you want. ✪✪✪✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Look for a way to cut your costs or to deal with home-related matters reasonably. Settlements need to be dealt with fairly and with everyone involved in mind. Anger solves nothing, but well-thought-out solutions will allow you to move forward. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* You don't have to copy others. Offer your own version of what you feel is happening and you will make a statement that will influence many. Passionate persistence will pay off and bring about change. Live life your way. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* The changes you want to make at home or to you personally can be put into play as long as you are open regarding your plans and you have legitimate answers to the questions that will arise should someone inquire about your motives. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* You will have difficulties dealing with people who show no restraint or discipline. Stick to your rules and live within your means regardless of temptation. Protect your home, possessions and important relationships against anyone trying to undermine you. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Whatever you want to accomplish, do so using your own steam. Too much outside help and interference will taint what you are trying to achieve. A slower pace and going it alone will bring higher returns as well as additional confidence. ✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Put some muscle behind what it is you want to accomplish. Added discipline will help you reach your goal. Getting angry or letting someone distract you will be your downfall. Stay focused and you'll claim victory. Choose to get along. ✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are impressionable, possessive and materialistic. You are patient and tenacious.

(To submit astrological questions to the "Dear Eugenia" column, visit Eugenialast.com, or join Eugenia on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.)

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		9	1		3	5		
	5		6				2	
8								4
4			8		2		3	7
				7				
3	9		5		6			1
6								8
	1				8		5	
		4	2		7	6		

Difficulty Level ★★ 3/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

2	7	5	9	6	3	4	8	1
8	6	3	5	1	4	9	2	7
1	9	4	7	8	2	5	6	3
7	3	9	8	4	5	2	1	6
4	8	1	2	9	6	7	3	5
5	2	6	3	7	1	8	9	4
6	1	7	4	2	9	3	5	8
9	5	8	6	3	7	1	4	2
3	4	2	1	5	8	6	7	9

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

NOW THAT'S ITALIAN PIZZA! Solution: 10 letters

T	C	Ⓜ	Ⓐ	Ⓚ	Ⓔ	N	A	I	L	I	C	I	S	L
O	H	I	O	A	G	A	R	N	I	S	H	E	I	C
M	R	I	P	Z	R	S	L	E	P	A	H	S	Z	H
A	A	T	C	O	Z	A	E	O	N	A	A	E	E	I
T	L	R	T	K	L	A	N	V	C	B	P	I	S	C
O	A	T	G	A	N	L	R	I	I	U	A	L	U	K
E	R	E	A	H	U	E	A	E	R	L	R	G	O	E
S	A	D	H	G	E	Q	S	L	L	A	O	U	I	N
A	N	E	B	G	L	R	S	S	O	L	M	P	C	O
U	O	S	Y	I	U	I	I	N	A	V	A	O	I	I
C	B	C	L	S	A	O	O	T	O	R	A	E	L	C
E	R	A	T	Z	E	N	D	T	A	I	D	I	E	N
A	A	I	Z	R	N	E	C	I	L	S	N	A	D	I
A	C	I	A	T	E	F	H	A	O	N	R	O	F	F
A	P	M	C	A	P	R	I	C	C	I	O	S	A	S

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Al Taglio, Aroma, Basil, Bianca, Capricciosa, Carbonara, Cheesy, Chicken, Cipolla, Delicious, Diavola, Dough, Feta, Forno, Garnish, Make, Mare, Margherita, Marinara, Mozzarella, Olives, Onions, Pizza, Pugliese, Quattro, Rucola, Rustica, Sarda, Sauce, Sfincione, Shape, Sicilian, Size, Slice, Tedesca, Thickness, Tomatoes

Yesterday's Answer: Scale

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 37 through 51, order on line at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

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JOB VANCANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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(3) Book Keeper
(1) Computer Specialist
(3) Sales Representative
(55) Food Preparation Server
(80) Commercial Cleaner
(1) Restaurant Manager

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- **(3) Commercial Cleaner**
- **(2) Seamstress**
- **(2) Tailors**

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is looking for:

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- **(3) Seamstress**
- **(2) Tailor**
- **(15) Carpenters**
- **(15) Masons**

Interested applicants may e-mail remypamintuan@gmail.com for more information.

We are an Equal Opportunity Employer

SAIPAN HIGHER EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
Office of the Mayor
Municipality of Saipan

NOTICE OF REGULAR SHEFA BOARD MEETING

In accordance with 1 CMC § 9901 et seq., as amended, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Assistance March 22nd, 2018 at 9:30 am at the Mayor of Saipan Conference Room, 2nd Floor, Ladera Center Building, Beach Road, Saipan.

AGENDA

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Roll Call
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Adoption of Minutes from February 22nd, 2018

II. Public Comments

III. Reports
1. Administrator
2. Chair
3. Committees
   a. Committee on Awards
   b. Committee on Appeal/ Deferments/Forbearance
   c. Committee on Policy and Procedures
   d. Committee on Program and Development
   e. Committee of Fiscal, Legislative and Community Affairs

IV. Old Business
1. Prior Learning Assessmnt -Action
2. NMTI Request for Reconsideration (Open Enrollment)-Action

V. New Business
1. Winter/Sprint 2018 Application Status

VI. Executive Session - Appeals (closed)

VII. Misc.

VIII. Next Meeting

IX. Adjournment

Note: Meeting may continue the following day should the need arise.

PC Bargain Corporation is inviting qualified individuals to apply for the following positions:

Administrative Assistant (1)
5 years experience in office administration, background in accounting is preferred. Must be able to work under time pressure and be able to have high skill in time management.

Sales Associate (3)
Must have an associate degree in college preferably in Business and Marketing Management with at least 5 year work relates experience in Sales and Marketing and in Credit and Collection.

Cellphone and Electronic Technician (1)
Minimum of 5 years experience in electronics and cellular phone repairs.

Cook (6) – Salut Restaurant
5 years of experience in kitchen operation with specialty in various Filipino and Japanese cuisine. Must be able to work under time pressure and flexible hours.

Baker (2) – Salut Restaurant
5 years of experience in baking and preparing various deli selections. Must be able to work flexible hours as the need arises.

Barrista (1) – Salut Restaurant
5 years experience in bar tending. Must be knowledgeable in various beverage mixes, serving and preparation. Must be able to work flexible hours.

Farmer (2) – Salut Restaurant
5 years experience in Agriculture and Farming.

Applications can be submitted at PC Bargain Corporation located on the Ground Floor, Tun Kiku's Building at Garapan. Salaries will commensurate with qualifications and experience. To be considered, applications must be submitted no later than 5:00pm, Friday, March 23, 2018.

PC Bargain Corporation is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Qualified women, minorities and disabled persons are encouraged to apply.

Geotesting, Inc. has openings for:

Two (2) Soils/Materials Technician Supervisors
Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree Engineering (may be foreign equivalent) and two years experience as a Soils/Materials Technician Supervisor, Assistant Soils/ Materials Technician Supervisor, Assistant Materials Supervisor or Soils/Materials Engineer.
Duties: Reviews requirements of new projects and assists in preparation of proposals for clients based on the project requirements, scope of site and subsurface explorations and laboratory testing requirements. Logs subsurface soils and rocks in test borings for engineering purposes. Visits project sites and evaluate surface and probable subsurface soil and rock conditions, and other data. Supervises soils/materials technicians in performing laboratory and field testing on soils, concrete, aggregates, bituminous mixtures, and other related materials. Summarizes and prepares reports of the laboratory and field testing data.

One (1) Soils/Materials Technician
Minimum Qualifications: Associates degree in Engineering (may be foreign educational equivalent) and one year experience as a Soils/Materials Technician or two (2) years experience as a Soils/Materials Technician or Assistant Soils/Materials Technician.
Duties: Performs laboratory and field testing on soils, concrete, aggregates, bituminous mixtures, and other related materials. Tests will include, but are not limited to, grain size analysis, compaction, liquid limit and plasticity index, bearing ratio, specific gravity, sand equivalent, and concrete compressive and tensile strength testing. Assists in performing test borings and obtaining subsurface soil samples. Observes excavation and back filling. Performs tests for design mix for concrete and bituminous mixes. Assists in performing infiltration tests in the soils. Performs field samplings of soils, concrete and bituminous mixtures.

One (1) Assistant Soils/Materials Technician
Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree in Engineering (may be foreign educational equivalent) and three (3) months experience as a Soils/Materials Technician.
Duties: Assists in performing laboratory and field testing on soils, concrete, aggregates, bituminous mixtures, and other related materials. Tests will include, but are not limited to, grain size analysis, compaction, liquid limit and plasticity index, bearing ratio, specific gravity, sand equivalent, and concrete compressive strength testing. Assists in performing test borings and obtaining subsurface soil samples. Observes excavation and back filling. Assists in performing tests for design mix for concrete and bituminous mixes. Assists in performing infiltration tests in the soils. Assists in field samplings of soils, concrete and bituminous mixtures.

One (1) Assistant Soils/Materials Technician
Minimum Qualifications: Associate's degree (any field and may be foreign educational equivalent) and six (6) months of experience in assisting with performing laboratory and field testing of soils, concrete, and other related materials.
Duties: Assists in performing laboratory and field testing on soils, concrete, aggregates, bituminous mixtures, and other related materials. Tests will include, but are not limited to, grain size analysis, compaction, liquid limit and plasticity index, bearing ratio, specific gravity, sand equivalent, and concrete compressive strength testing. Assists in performing test borings and obtaining subsurface soil samples. Observes excavation and back filling. Assists in performing tests for design mix for concrete and bituminous mixes. Assists in performing infiltration tests in the soils. Assists in field samplings of soils, concrete and bituminous mixtures.

One (1) Accountant
Minimum Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in Accounting (may be foreign educational equivalent), four years experience as an accountant; one year internal audit experience; must have an extensive knowledge in all accounting cycle; must be knowledgeable in Peach Tree and QuickBooks operations, and must know basic operations and procedures for geotechnical engineering and construction material testing.
Duties: Prepares financial statement, Gross Receipts Tax returns, invoices and statement of accounts, billings, renewal of company's licenses, communicates with various government agencies regarding business operations, and responsible for communicating with the Head Office regarding operations in Saipan Office. Prepare payroll and employer's withholding taxes, remits FICA taxes, prepares cash flow statement, bank reconciliation, and responsible for the accuracy of accounting entries and other duties as assigned.

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McIlroy triumphs at Bay Hill; Tiger takes fifth

ORLANDO (AP)—With enormous galleries triggering the Richter scale on a hot Sunday at Bay Hill, Tiger Woods stood on the tee box of the 16th hole one shot out of the lead in the Arnold Palmer Invitational.

The top of the leaderboard was packed with A-list talent, with Woods and other major champions Henrik Stenson, Rory McIlroy and Justin Rose all in position to win, and Arnie's place was ready to explode.

And then, poof.

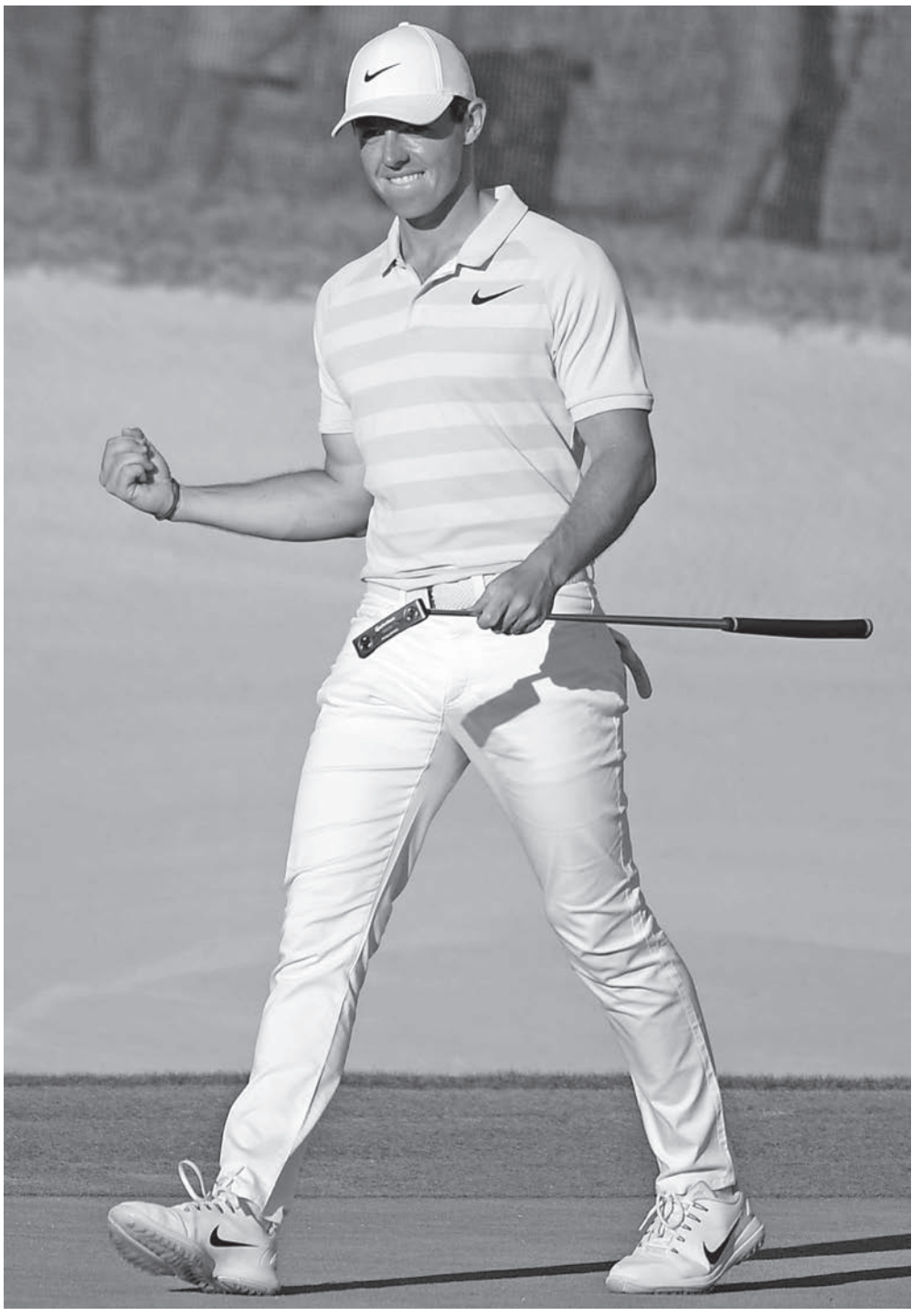
Woods sailed his tee shot on the easiest hole on the course, a par-5 playing short, out of bounds to the left of the fairway and the decibel level nearly went mute. Just like that, Woods' run at an 80th PGA Tour title during his remarkable return to the game was suddenly kaput.

Woods went on to bogey the 16th and then the 17th and finished with a 3-under-par 69 and 10 under for the tournament. He tied for fifth, eight shots behind McIlroy, who made eight birdies in his last 13 holes.

"I wasn't committed to what I was going to do," Woods said of his errant drive. "If I hit driver I have to fit it with a cut. Back of my mind, I said, 'Why don't you just bomb it over the top?' It's only like 320 to carry and as hot as it is, the ball's flying. Or just hit a 3-wood straight away.

"In the back of my mind I'm running through these different scenarios and it's on me. I didn't commit to either one of those three shots and I hit a poor one."

While Woods' return to the winner's circle remained just out of his grasp, McIlroy once again was back in full flight. McIlroy made four consecutive birdies on the back nine, which included a chip-in for a 3 on the par-4 15th, and then closed with another birdie from 25 feet on the 18th to close out his win.



AP

Rory McIlroy of Northern Ireland celebrates after making a birdie on the 18th green during the final round of the Arnold Palmer Invitational golf tournament Sunday, March 18, 2018, in Orlando, Fla.

McIlroy signed for a 64 to finish at 18 under, three shots ahead of Bryson DeChambeau (68). Rose finished another stroke back in third after a 67. Stenson, the 54-hole leader, finished fourth with a 71.

McIlroy, a former world No. 1 and a four-time major champion, had gone 26 tournaments since his last victory at the Tour Championship in 2016 to win the FedEx Cup. But he said this week he's back to loving the game again and that he even enjoys all the practice rounds. He took advantage of his length and rode a hot, new putter to his 14th victory on the PGA Tour.

McIlroy missed the cut last week in the Valspar Championship.

"I worked on everything since then, my ball-striking, my driving, my putting," said McIlroy, who needed just 100 putts this week, the lowest number he's ever had en route to a win on the PGA Tour. "I was saying the last two weeks that I wasn't that far away. It was nice to see everything come together finally. To get my first PGA Tour win in I don't know how long it is, feels great."

Despite Woods coming up short, it was the second consecutive Sunday where the red shirt meant something on the Tour. Woods, bedridden and in constant pain just 11 months ago, came up one shot short last week and finished in a tie for second in the Valspar, his best result since 2015.

"If you would have asked me at the beginning of the year that I would have had a chance to win two golf tournaments, I would have taken that in a heartbeat," said Woods, whose 69 was his 10th consecutive round of par or better, his longest stretch in six years.

This was his fifth start on the PGA Tour this year, and fourth in the last five weeks. And now he'll head into the Masters, which he's won four times but hasn't played the past two years, coming off his best two finishes since 2015.

With more repetitions under his belt—and the ability to practice at length because he's pain free—Woods has regained his tournament feels. While he's still adjusting to his fused back, which limits his rotation, he still is one of the longest hitters in the game. His famous stinger is again a weapon. He can hit the ball both ways and is flighting shots with ease.

And his short game has been impeccable.

Raiders trade returner Patterson to Patriots

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP)—The Oakland Raiders are trading star kick returner Cordarrelle Patterson to the New England Patriots.

A person familiar with the deal said Sunday that the deal will become official after Patterson passes a physical. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal had not been announced. Pardon My Take first reported the trade.

NFL Network reported that Oakland will receive a fifth-round pick in the deal and send one of its six sixth-round picks to New England.

Patterson is one of the most accomplished kickoff returners in the game. His career average of 30.2 yards per return ranks second all-time to Hall of Famer Gale Sayers' 30.6 mark.

Patterson spent one year in Oakland after playing four seasons in Minnesota. The Vikings originally acquired Patterson with the 29th pick in the 2013 draft after trading up with the Patriots.

Patterson has played receiver throughout his career, but has made his biggest impact as a returner where he has scored five touchdowns and has always helped create good field position for his teams.

The Raiders had the best average starting field position after kickoffs last season in the NFL, while the Patriots ranked fourth.

That speed has been less effective as a receiver where Patterson has averaged only 10 yards per catch in his career as he has been mostly used on screens and short passes.

Patterson caught 31 passes for 309 yards last season for Oakland and also ran for 121 yards on 13 carries for three scores.

For his career, Patterson has 163 catches for 1,625 yards and seven touchdowns to go along with 44 carries for 454 yards and six scores.

The Raiders have made some moves at receiver this offseason under new coach Jon Gruden. Jordy Nelson was signed last week to be a starter alongside Amari Cooper, leading to the decision to let Michael Crabtree go.

Oakland also signed Griff Whalen for depth at returner and receiver and is reportedly interested in former Washington receiver Ryan Grant as a potential free agent addition.

In Pittsburgh, the Steelers have signed inside linebacker Jon Bostic to a two-year contract.

Details of the deal were not disclosed and it will not be finalized until after Bostic undergoes a physical on Monday.

The 26-year-old Bostic played 14 games for Indianapolis last season, getting 97 tackles and one sack. Bostic injured his right knee against Denver in December and finished the season on injured reserve. Pittsburgh is Bostic's fifth stop.

Bostic began his career with Chicago after being taken in the second round of the 2013 draft. He played two seasons in Chicago then one in New England before the Patriots traded him to Detroit in 2016. He missed the entire season in Detroit with a foot injury before joining the Colts.

The Steelers are in need of depth at inside linebacker with Ryan Shazier already ruled out for 2018 because of a spinal injury suffered in Cincinnati in December.

FIFA president says Russia World Cup will not be a 'war'

PANAMA CITY—FIFA president Gianni Infantino said Saturday that the upcoming World Cup will not be a "war," as Russian authorities and Vladimir Putin are committed to ensuring safety amid fears of fan clashes.

"We are not going to war," Infantino said. "You will see that we are going to have a football party and if anyone wants to cause trouble, they will have problems."

"The Russians are very committed to this World Cup being a total success," he told a news conference in Panama.

There are concerns violence could erupt between fanatical "ultras," particularly Russian and English fans, who clashed at the 2016 European Championship tournament in France.

However, the FIFA chief—explaining he had been involved in the organization of four European Championships—confirmed organizers in Russia are pulling out all the stops to avoid such incidents.

"I have a little bit of experience in organizing big events and I have to say that I have never seen the level of preparation—especially in security—that I am seeing in Russia anywhere else," he said.

The tournament—which runs from June 14 to July 15—is set to attract fans from all over the world, as spectators will not need a visa to attend.

Meanwhile, FIFA has finally and fully approved video review to help referees at the World Cup.

The last step toward giving match officials high-tech help in Russia was agreed to on Friday by FIFA's ruling council chaired by Infantino.

"We are extremely happy with that decision," Infantino said at a news conference, adding it would lead to "a more transparent and fairer sport. We need to live with our times."

FIFA will now look to sign a World Cup sponsor for video assistant referees (VAR).

Also, FIFA reported a $192 million net loss in its published accounts for 2017, and agreed to publish the voting choices of member federations in the 2026 World Cup bidding contest on June 13 in Moscow.

A North American bid combining the United States, Canada, and Mexico is competing with Morocco for the right to host the first 48-team tournament in eight years' time.

Westbrook, Thunder end Raptors' 11-game win streak

TORONTO (AP)— Oklahoma City coach Billy Donovan praised his team's poise following a hard-fought road win over the streaking Raptors.

Toronto, meanwhile, found it harder to stay calm and collected after some controversial calls down the stretch.

Russell Westbrook had 37 points, 14 assists and 13 rebounds for his fifth straight triple-double, Steven Adams scored 25 points and the Thunder beat the Raptors 132-125 on Sunday, snapping Toronto's winning streak at 11.

"You've got to be able to keep your composure through it all," Westbrook said. "That's what the game is all about. We've got a lot of veteran guys on this team who are able to do that."

Paul George scored 22 points and Carmelo Anthony had 15 as the Thunder extended their winning streak to six. Corey Brewer scored 10 points for Oklahoma City.

"A big part of it tonight was our team's poise," Donavan said. "That was really important."

DeMar DeRozan scored 24 points and Kyle Lowry fouled out with 22 points and 10 assists as the Eastern Conference-leading Raptors suffered just their sixth home loss of the season. Toronto is 29-6 at Air Canada Centre, the best home record in the NBA.

DeRozan, Serge Ibaka and Raptors coach Dwane Casey were all ejected in the final minute for complaining to the referees. DeRozan was incensed after not getting a call when he tried to drive on Brewer with 30 seconds left. DeRozan picked up two technicals in the following 22 seconds.

"He tried to smack me because I had a layup," a visibly frustrated DeRozan said. "I got fouled."

AP
Oklahoma City Thunder Corey Brewer, left, battles for a loose ball with Toronto Raptors DeMar DeRozan during the second half NBA basketball action in Toronto on Sunday, March 18, 2018.

Having reviewed the video, Casey said the Raptors would file a formal complaint.

"Officials are going to miss calls but, at the juncture of the game when some of the calls were made, we've got to get it right around the league," Casey said. "Not just this game, the entire league."

Still, Casey took pains to point out that the Raptors, not the referees, were ultimately to blame.

"We made enough mistakes down the stretch also," Casey said. "We shot ourselves in the foot, missed easy shots, layups, free throws, turnovers."

DeRozan, however, didn't share Casey's view. Asked whether the officials had cost Toronto the game, DeRozan said, "It's obvious for us."

Delon Wright and C.J. Miles each scored 15 points, and Pascal Siakam and Jonas Valanciunas each had 10 for the Raptors.

The score was tied 119-119 when Lowry fouled out with 3:19 remaining. Westbrook immediately drove for a layup past Wright, Lowry's replacement.

After Wright missed a layup at the other end, Westbrook added another layup to cap a personal 10-point run and give Oklahoma City a 123-119 lead with 2:38 remaining.

Wright and DeRozan each made a pair of free throws to tie it at 123-123 with 1:41 left, although DeRozan missed a free throw on Anthony's technical foul.

Westbrook put the Thunder ahead to stay by driving for a layup with 39 seconds left, then banked home a jump shot with 11 seconds left, giving Oklahoma City a four-point cushion.

Trail Blazers 122, Clippers 109

In Los Angeles, Damian Lillard scored 23 points and CJ McCollum added 21 to lead the Portland Trail Blazers to their 13th straight victory.

Portland's dynamic guard duo led five Blazers players in double-figures, with Maurice Harkness scoring 21 points, Jusuf Nurkic 17 along with 12 rebounds and Al-Farouq Aminu adding 16 points.

Lou Williams led the Clippers with 30 points. Montrezl Harrell had 24 points and Andre Jordan had 16 rebounds for Los Angeles, which lost its third straight and fell two games back of the final playoff spot in the Western Conference. The Clippers have 13 games remaining.

The Blazers threatened to take a commanding lead at the break, going on a 12-0 run to take their biggest advantage of the half at 56-44. The Clippers responded to pull within four before trailing 58-52 at the half.

Portland, however, came back with a 10-0 run early in the third quarter, going up 70-56 to take a lead it would never surrender.

Rockets 129, Timberwolves 120

In Minnesota, for the Houston Rockets, finally facing a challenge from Minnesota and a hostile crowd on the road was a good test to prepare for the postseason.

The Timberwolves, meanwhile, are left holding on for dear life in a tightening playoff race.

James Harden had 34 points and 12 assists and helped the Rockets fend off a fourth-quarter rally and beat the Timberwolves. The win was Houston's 26th in 28 games, and it dropped Minnesota into the eighth playoff spot in the Western Conference.

Houston led by as many as 25 before the Wolves, who started the day in a three-way tie for the West's fifth spot, pulled within five in the fourth. Harden had 11 points in the final 6:34, including a 3-pointer with 58 seconds left that effectively secured the win.

Pelicans 108, Celtics 89

In New Orleans, Anthony Davis picked up his dribble along the baseline and pulled up for a tough, 14-foot fallaway as he was fouled by Celtics rookie Abdel Nader.

As the shot fell through to cap another big night for the Pelicans' All-Star, the crowd rose to its feet and Davis exchanged high-fives with fans along the sideline before making his foul shot. It seemed a fitting punctuation to the type of performance New Orleans will continue to need to survive a tight Western Conference playoff race.

Davis had 34 points and 11 rebounds, and New Orleans beat banged-up Boston 108-89.

Florida State ousts top-seeded Xavier

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)— Florida State senior Phil Cofer knows the biggest key to making any comeback, especially in the NCAA Tournament.

Don't get rattled.

Now the Florida State Seminoles are on their way to the NCAA Tournament's round of 16 for the first time since 2011 after upsetting top-seeded Xavier with a furious rally.

PJ Savoy made a 3- pointer with 1:08 left to give Florida State its first lead of the second half, and the Seminoles rallied from a 12-point deficit to beat the Musketeers 75-70 on Sunday night in the second round of the West Region.

"Everybody kept their composure, and that's what you got to do in March Madness," Cofer said. "And I think we did it."

The Seminoles did just that when trailing by 12 with 10:42 left and outscored Xavier 31-14 down the stretch, including the final seven points of the game.

"We were much better than Xavier in the last two and a half minutes of the game," Florida State coach Leonard Hamilton said. "Sometimes when the games are close, that's all that's important."

They made Xavier the second No. 1 seed ousted in tournament's first weekend, sending the Musketeers (29-6) out along with Virginia. It's a painful ending for a team that returned four starters from a team that lost in the Elite Eight last year—to Gonzaga, the team Florida State (22-11) will play Thursday night in Los Angeles.

"Obviously, tough loss for our group," Xavier coach Chris Mack said. "Pretty emotional ending, the finality of what I think is the greatest sporting event in our country."

Senior guard J.P. Macura said he felt this was the best team he's played on.

"For us to lose this early, it just, it feels terrible," a quiet Macura said in the locker room.

West Virginia 94, Marshall 71

In San Diego, two in-state foes being forced back together on the court by the NCAA Tournament thousands of miles from home became a one-sided celebration for West Virginia.

Jevon Carter was the one leading the way.

Carter scored 28 points, Lamont West added 18 off the bench and West Virginia overwhelmed its in-state rival beating on Sunday night in the second-round of the NCAA Tournament.

The Mountain State showdown out on the West Coast was all about the fifth-seeded Mountaineers. Bigger, more physical and making fewer mistakes, West Virginia (26-10) took control with a 19-0 first-half run. Carter's three 3-pointers in the first five minutes of the second half made sure there wouldn't be a rally coming from the 13th-seeded Thundering Herd. Carter added five assists, five steals and four rebounds and did it in just 29 minutes, sending West Virginia back to the round of 16 for the second straight year.

The Mountaineers will face top-seeded Villanova next Friday.

"We did it for the state," West said. "We just wanted to go out there and play hard. We knew that we didn't want to go home with (a loss) and we did what we could do."

Aside from his scoring, Carter was the leader of West Virginia's swarming defense that made the night miserable for the Herd.

Kansas State 50, UMBC 43

In Charlotte, the ultimate underdog story is over, but this NCAA Tournament will always be remembered for the sweetest No. 16 in college basketball history.

UMBC's brief, but historic run ended with a loss to ninth seeded Kansas State.

UMBC became the first 16 seed to beat a No. 1, destroying top-ranked Virginia 74-54 on Friday night. After pulling off an all-time sports stunner, the Retrievers ran out of magic against the Wildcats.

"I'm proud of my guys, man," UMBC senior guard Jourdan Grant. "We made history. Can't be mad at that. I wouldn't want to go out with another set of guys, man. I love these guys to the moon and back. This season, we'll remember it for the rest of our lives."

As UMBC coach Ryan Odom emptied his bench with 9.4 seconds left, the crowd gave the Retrievers a standing ovation.

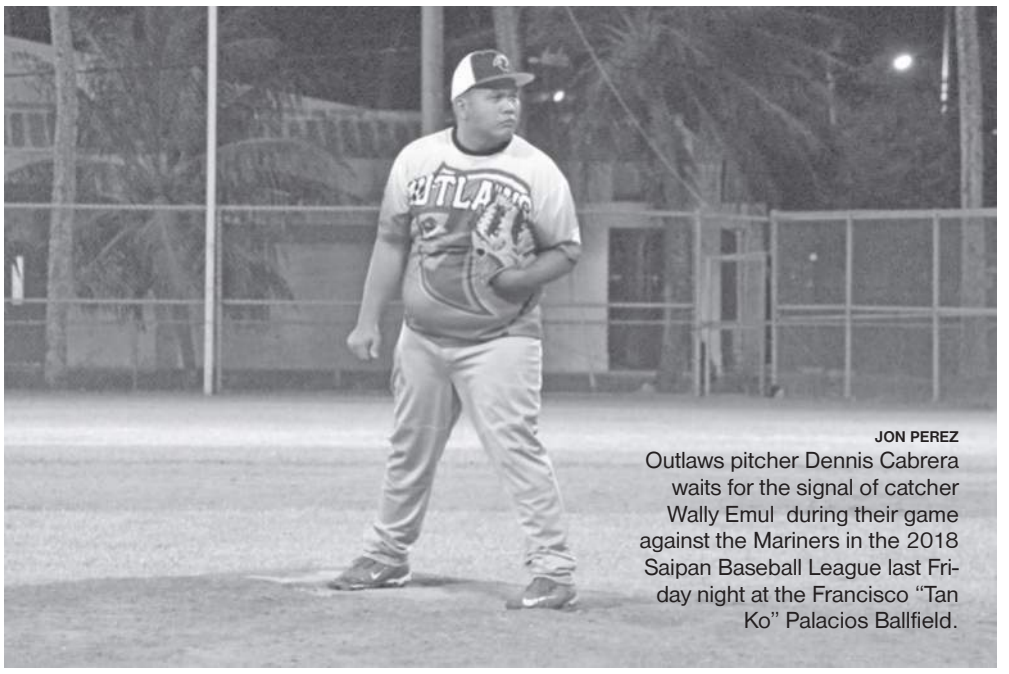
Mariners cruise past Outlaws in SBL

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Nate Camacho pitched four innings, while Shane Yamada drove in three runs to help the Mariners cruise to a 25-7 win over the Outlaws in last Friday's game in the 2018 Saipan Baseball League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Camacho limited the Outlaws to three hits and a pair of runs after two complete innings before shutting them down in the third. He also had five strikeouts and three walks.

Dave Matagolai, who was hit by a Camacho pitch, scored in the first inning on a T.J. Dela Cruz RBI single. Olympio Muna, who got on base on a Jon Villagomez error, reached home plate off a Matagolai RBI walk with the bases loaded in the second inning. Matagolai again scored at the bottom of the fourth inning, while Wally Emul had two runs. McGregory Camacho and Vinnie Cabrera were the other Outlaws players that crossed home plate.



JON PEREZ
Outlaws pitcher Dennis Cabrera waits for the signal of catcher Wally Emul during their game against the Mariners in the 2018 Saipan Baseball League last Friday night at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Yamada, with one out, had a two-RBI single at the top of the second to give the Mariners a 7-0 lead. The Mariners went on to enjoy a 10-0 edge entering the bottom half.

The Mariners were merciless despite the big lead, scoring five runs in the third, two in the fifth, and eight more in the sixth.

Yamada finished 5-for-6 with four runs, three RBIs, and two triples and got a lot of help from Pat Tenorio and Ton Tenorio. Pat went 4-for-6 with three runs and a double, while Ton scored three times on a 3-for-5 batting, had two RBIs, and made a triple.

The win was the second in four games for the Mariners, while the Outlaws were winless after five matches.

Meanwhile, the Blue Jays were playing Titanium at press time in a battle of teams that are in the middle of the standings. GSM, on the other hand, guns for its sixth straight win at 7pm tonight when they duel the Indians.

Jiu-jitsu team to compete in Guam, asks for support

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

TrenchTech Gym Saipan will be sending a seven-member team to the 2018 Marianas Open Brazilian Jiu-jitsu Tournament in Guam on April 22.

TrenchTech Gym owner and promoter Cuki Alvarez and professor Clinton Dela Cruz will be heading the team, which is asking for support from the local business community.

"We are humbly soliciting monetary donations from the business community to assist us with our travel expenses," Alvarez told *Saipan Tribune*.

He added that Team Saipan is ready to represent in the region's premier grappling tournament. Alvarez will be competing as a brown belt, while Dela Cruz is the lone black belt on the team that also has Kier Agda (white), Ken Tanzawa (purple), and blue belters Paulo Sangalang, Giovonni Taitingfong, and Jeff Garcia as members.

Last year, Alvarez won a gold medal in the Masters 37 and above purple belt absolute gi division in the 10th Copa de Marianas Brazilian Jiu-jitsu Tournament in Guam. He defeated Norbert Mendiola of Team Steel Athletics-Spike 22 via points, 6-4, in the gold medal match of the annual event held at the Father Duenas Phoenix Center in Mangilao. Alvarez faced Rich Flores, also of Team Steel Athletics, in his first match, winning by Samurai choke submission in over three minutes of their scheduled seven-minute bout. Mendiola, meanwhile, needed a Bow and Arrow choke hold to beat compatriot Flores in the semifinals and advance to the medal match against Alvarez.

More than 100 grapplers and BJJ practitioners joined the one-day event that had different weight divisions for kids, teens, adults, and masters age groups.

Meanwhile, interested donors can contact Alvarez at the TrenchTech Gym in Garapan or at 783-4MMA (4662).

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Cuki Alvarez, center, joins the rest of Team Saipan for a group photo after their training at the TrenchTech Gym in Garapan. Alvarez and six other Brazilian Jiu-jitsu practitioners will be competing in the 2018 Marianas Open Brazilian Jiu-jitsu Tournament in Guam next month.

KANOA

From Page 28

lare contributed one after finding the back of the net in the 44th.

Meanwhile, the first game in the division had Southern United outclassing Matansa, 5-1.

It was Southern United's first victory of the season after dropping its first three games, while Matansa is still without a win, absorbing its third loss.

Southern United opened a 2-0 halftime lead and remained on target in the second half to break its three-game losing skid. Keisha Deleon Guerrero knocked in the pair of goals for Southern United in the 18th and 33rd minute and made it three in a row with her shot in the 36th.

Matansa then cut the deficit to two, 1-3, when Jenelyn Palad ended the team's drought in the 53rd minute, but Southern United got the one goal back quickly, as Isabelle Evangelista scored in the 54th. A goal from Winneb Echavez three minutes later kept Matansa in the game, however Deleon Guerrero struck anew in the 65th to give Southern United the insurance.

BOYS U18
Kanoa 8, NDA 0

Kanoa notched its second victory in the division after crushing the National Development Team in the second game at the Hopwood Middle School Field.

Andruw Omelau and Merrick Toves joined forces in demolishing NDA as they tallied three goals each. Toves dropped two straight goals, scoring in the ninth and 25th minute, and he completed a hat trick in the 44th. Omelau's goals were recorded in successive fashion, as he delivered in the 51st, 64th, and 78th minute. Brian Lubao and Sebastien Manabat registered the two other goals for Kanoa with the former making a shot in the 29th minute and the latter in the 48th.

With the win, Kanoa (2-0-2) took the third spot from Matansa (1-2-1).

TanHoldings 2, Matansa 2

TanHoldings is still in the lead despite settling for a draw against Matansa in the other match in the division last weekend.

TanHoldings holds a 3-1-0 mark to pace idle MP United (2-1-0), while Matansa fell to fourth place.

Joshua De Leon earned two goals for Matansa with his conversion in the 62nd minute tying the match. His other goal came in the 43rd minute.

Jonathan Capayas handed TanHoldings its first goal in the 11th minute, while John Michael Rojas delivered the second one in the 46th.

EASY

From Page 28

the boys U15 division match last Thursday.

The Ol'Aces Elite had 11 of its players scoring in the lopsided win, while the Dandan Sonics drew baskets from only five players.

The Ol'Aces Elite was in control of the game right from the get-go, taking a 28-9 advantage at halftime and showed no mercy in the second half to hand the Dandan Sonics another loss.

In the boys U18, the 670 Sonics XVIII bounced back from its defeat to the NMI Rollers after cruising past the Ol'Aces Elite, 76-32.

Matthew Kapileo topscored for the 670 Sonics XVIII with his 15 points, while Keeanu Diaz chipped in 11. Jerome Malasarte, Jeremie Manansala, and Emmanuel Cobacha combined for 24 more points for the 670 Sonics XVIII, making it easier for the team to dispatch its opponent.

With the 670 Sonics XVIII having too many options on offense, it established a promising 34-19 halftime lead and kept going in the second half, while the Ol'Aces Elite failed to counter-attack. No Ol'Aces Elite player hit double figures in last Friday's game, as its main score, Greg Deleon Guerrero, collected only 7 points.

U15 DIVISION
Friday Game

Young Warriors 76 — Aguon 31, Igitol 12, Magofna 10, Lifoifoi 7, Fejeran 6, Kainoa 6, Sulap 6, Omar 4.

670 Sonics XVI 41 — Dancel 10, R. Bernardo 8, Contreras 8, Magat 7, Chavez 3, Mendoza 2, Galang 2, Seo 2.

Thursday Game

Ol'Aces Elite 48 — Mizutani 8, King 6, Lazaro 5, Soriano 4, Aitan 4, Deleon Guerrero 4, Ichihara 4, Laniyo 2, Naraja 2, Torres 2, Rabauliman 2.

Dandan Sonics 23 — Quitugua 8, Mendiola 7, Monte 4, Faisao 2, McKinnon 2.

U18 DIVISION

670 Sonics XVIII 76 — Kapileo 15, Diaz 11, Malasarte 9, Manansala 8, Cobacha 7, Villanueva 4, Aque 4, Ordona 2.

Ol'Aces Elite 32 — Deleon Guerrero 7, Fleming 5, Perez 4, Aitan 2, Pua 2, A. Quitugua 2, Ray 2, Okaruru 2, T. Quitugua 2.

COMETS

From Page 28

Justin Matagolai and Ross Arriola grounded out to first.

Castro pitched six innings, giving up two earned runs on two hits with nine strikeouts and five walks.

Nakamura closed out for Comets I, forcing Braves leadoff batter Antonio Norita to ground out to first.

Heath Camacho was already good for a single, but he tried to stretch it to second base where he was caught out after center fielder Agulto made the quick throw to second baseman Arriola.

Nakamura walked Isidro Cabrera and then ended the game when he struck out Patrick Quitugua.

Fielders 15, Comets II 3

Delbert Sablan allowed five hits with no earned runs, while striking out five and walking two in five innings on the mound.

Sablan also had an RBI triple in the sixth, while Shane Borja and Justin Aguon drove in a run each for the Fielders.

The Fielders had a six-run third inning to set up the early victory via 10-run mercy rule. The Comets II scored only one run each in the first, fifth, and sixth inning.

2018 Taga Kids Age Group & Relay Triathlon

PHOTOS By JON and MACKENZIE PEREZ

Coume Kaga steps into the podium to receive her medals during the awards ceremony for the Taga Kids Age Group & Relay Triathlon held last Saturday at the Paupau Beach.

Agape Christian School students pose for a photo before competing and volunteering in Taga Kids.

Kaithlyn Chavez removes her swim cap and goggles as she heads to the swim-bike transition area.

The Top 2 teams in the boys division show their medals.

Triathlon Association of the CNMI vice president Florence Antonio, right, and secretary Ronald Villafria, left, join the Agape Christian School teams that finished 1-2 in the U18 division for a group photo.

Mark Chavez heads to the finish line to comple the swim-bike-run race.

Two participants run side by side as they head to the swim-bike transition area.

Akira Kadokura comes out of the water and runs to the swim-bike transition area.

McIlroy triumphs at Bay Hill; Tiger takes fifth

PAGE 24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Westbrook, Thunder end Raptors' 11-game win streak

PAGE 25

Comets split Jr. League games

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Comets I and II had mixed fortunes against their respective foes as action in the Juniors division of the Saipan Little League continued over the weekend at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Comets I banked on Bing Nakamura's batting and J.P. Castro's pitching in completing a 9-5 win over the NSA Braves last Saturday.

Nakamura, with no out and two runners on base, belted an inside-the-park home run at the top of the third, as Comets I jumped to a 6-0 lead after two and a half innings.

Justin Agulto led off with a single, while Castro was next at bat and had another hit for Comets I, setting up Nakamura's bases-clearing triple. Reid Teregeyo walked, stole second, and later scored on a Nate Aizon RBI single. Aizon also stole second, but was caught out at third on a quick throw made by Braves catcher Tristan Norita to third baseman Lufo Babauta. Comets I failed to score after that, as

See COMETS on Page 26

JON PEREZ
The Comets' Reid Teregeyo waits for the pitch from Natibu Sports Association Braves during their game in the Junior League division of the 2018 Saipan Little League Baseball last Saturday at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

Easy victory for Young Warriors

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Young Warriors hammered the 670 Sonics XVI, 76-41, in the boys U15 division game in the 2018 Frank M. Diaz Memorial Youth League last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Henry Aguon towed the Young Warriors to the easy win after firing 31 points. He also drew enough support from his teammates, as all the players that the Young Warriors fielded in the match made it to the board.

Vince Itigol and Joseph David Magofna finished in twin digits, scoring 12 and 10, respectively.

The Young Warriors broke away in the second quarter, as they leaned on their balance offense to turn a 22-15 lead in the first to a 40-23 advantage at the break. The winning squad padded its lead in the third canto, 55-31, behind the 12 markers of Aguon and was never threatened in the fourth for the 35-point winning margin.

Meanwhile, the Ol'Aces Elite also coasted past the Dandan Sonics, 48-23, in

See EASY on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Young Warriors defenders challenge a shot from a Sonics XVI player during the first half of their boys U15 division game in the Diaz youth caging last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Kanoa, Shirley's still unbeaten

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Shirley's Football Club and Kanoa kept their undefeated records in the girls U16 division of the 2018 NMIFA Spring Youth League after earning shutout wins last Saturday at the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Field.

Kanoa improved to a 4-0-0 win-draw-loss mark following a 4-0 victory over TanHoldings in the second game last weekend. Paulynn Grace Joyce made all four goals for Kanoa, which stayed on top of the team standings in the seven-squad field. Joyce scored in the 18th, 21st, 43rd, and 45th minute.

In the final match of last weekend's triple-header, Shirley's ripped MP United, 6-0, to move up to third place, dislodging TanHoldings. Shirley's now has a 2-1-0 card to lead TanHoldings (2-1-2) and inch closer against MP United (3-1-2).

Katrina Costales delivered a hat trick for Shirley's with her first goal coming in right in the fourth minute and the last two made back-to-back, as she lit up the board in the 21st and 41st minute. The returning Jerlyn Castillo chipped in the 12th and the second in the 60th minute, while Therize Mil- two, getting her first in

See KANOA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Shirley's Football Club's Esther Jones, left, keeps up with a dribbling MP United player during their girls U16 division game in the 2018 NMIFA Spring Youth League last Saturday at the Francisco M. Sablan Middle School Field.